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Notes of the Week

THE cry of a "trick" election comes from thinking both muddled and malicious. There are, to be sure, conditions under which the Opposition is entitled to tell the Government that the time for dissolution has come. Such conditions exist when the Government is impotent or acts in defiance of the principles on which it came into office. But under what conditions is the Opposition entitled to denounce the Government for dissolving? It is not the comparatively irresponsible Opposition but the Government that must judge whether or not for discharge of its duties it needs an increase of supporters in the House, or a mandate on some new question, or release from an old pledge. Mr. Baldwin, so far from being guilty of trickery, has shown characteristic straightness in going to the country as soon as his policy took a shape incapable of reconciliation with his predecessor's pledge. It is true that the election comes too soon for Labour, but the convenience of Labour is not exactly the criterion of what is honest.

THE COUNTRY'S CHOICE

It cannot be too often reiterated that the coming election will be a fight not between Protection and Free Trade but between Conservatism and Socialism. Conservatism is the only possible choice for rational people at the present time. The Liberals are reunited, but have no policy; the Socialists have a policy, but about the worst policy for stricken industrialism that could be devised outside a madhouse. A Capital Levy is turning the dagger in the wound; Protection is at least applying a plaster, under which the wound may heal. In addition, the Conservative programme includes generous benefits for agriculture, and a social policy conceived in the true democratic spirit.

THE ELECTION AND AFTER

The elections will mainly be fought as three-cornered contests, and the caves and coteries of 1922 will have disappeared. We do not doubt that Mr. Baldwin will get the mandate which, as an honest man, he has decided to seek without delay; but the relative positions of the Oppositions in the new Parliament are not

without a speculative interest. Whatever the respective strengths of Liberals and Socialists, the Liberals are likely to constitute the more effective opposition, by reason of their superior debating power on the subject of Protection. The Socialists, moreover, are already deliberately dodging the Protection issue, which they cannot conscientiously oppose if they really have the interests of the working man at heart. Electors—unless insanity seizes them—are unlikely to be over-enthusiastic about the alternative of a Capital Levy.

MR. CHURCHILL GOES THE WHOLE HOG

Mr. Churchill has now irrevocably committed himself to the Liberal Party and all its most venerable shibboleths; and we for our part frankly regret the loss to Conservatism of one who is at heart a Tory. But Mr. Churchill, for all his mastery of strategy in war, has managed the strategy of his own career badly. He stuck to his friend, Lord Birkenhead, through thick and thin, when otherwise he might have come back to Conservatism. Now he has thrown Lord Birkenhead over by definitely casting in his lot with Liberalism at the very moment when there is a chance of Lord Birkenhead being received again into the Conservative camp.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

What an opportunity Mr. Churchill has here missed! If he had parted from Lord Birkenhead a little sooner and joined the Conservative Party in the crisis a year ago, consider what his position to-day would have been. He might have been Prime Minister of England within a couple of years. As it is, even if Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, and Sir John Simon were all out of the way, what prospect has Liberalism of needing a Prime Minister within the next five years? Very little, we imagine.

PERSONAL POLITICS

Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who opposed the Conservative Party when it stood out for its integrity last autumn, now find themselves *personæ non gratae* to the "second-class brains," and are left stranded, with "strong arms" but no "glit-

tering prizes." Their abilities would undoubtedly be valuable to Conservatism in the coming campaign, but we cannot pretend that the feeling of the party against their inclusion is wrong. What we do deprecate very strongly are the anxieties and misgivings manifested here and there by individual members about this or that detail of policy. The issue is Conservatism *versus* Socialism; details can be adjusted when the Capital Levy has been defeated.

THE CAPITAL LEVY

If desperate diseases demand desperate remedies, this, on Labour's own showing, should be the time to try the Capital Levy. Mr. Snowden, to be sure, explains that the time for its application is past, and some few of his colleagues seem to be willing to discuss the expediency of putting the Capital Levy quite at the bottom of the medicine chest and saying as little as possible about it. And this though the chest really contains nothing else worth mentioning, so that the only Labour alternative is to rely on those bedside manners which the wild men of the Party have not yet acquired. We find the idea ingenious, and would point out that, so long as the Capital Levy is retained in Labour's pharmacopœia, potential patients will discuss it even though the physicians keep silent. The amount of prominence it will have depends not merely on Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his friends, but on Conservatives—who will be exceedingly foolish if they do not make it one of the chief topics of their election utterances.

LABOUR AND THE ELECTION

The election catches Labour rather seriously unprepared, but this will probably affect not so much the number of candidates as their class. At the moment the likelihood of 460 candidates is mentioned in Labour circles which should be well informed. With the single exception of Mr. Hodge, all the principal members of the Party will stand for election, but in the rank and file of candidates are sure to be found certain intellectuals and adventurers, who are there simply because they can do something more than pay their own election expenses. Funds are low, and the decline in Trade Union membership, of which a fall of 3,000 in the Amalgamated Engineering Union in one month is the latest example, has caused some depression at headquarters. But of the general vigour of the Labour effort there can be little doubt. In some constituencies, where prospects are thought to be good for a Liberal candidate with advanced social opinions, Labour intends to hold back; but the campaign against Conservatism will be prosecuted with the utmost energy, though with a more than usually motley batch of Labour candidates.

PARTY FUNDS

Party finance is always a mysterious thing to most of us, and indeed there are dark secrets with regard to it kept even from the initiated. But the cheerful commerce in titles and honours which was carried on under the Lloyd George regime has made his particular party chest a matter of very little secrecy; and it is known to be extremely well lined. Mr. Asquith's, on the other hand, is said to be in a condition resembling that of Mother Hubbard's cupboard; a fact which no doubt will do something to sweeten the otherwise somewhat reluctant union of the two wings of the party.

DECREE OF RESTITUTION

For Liberalism is reunited in spite of itself. The matter of its reunion has always been something of a comedy, and although a paper union has now been achieved, it may be questioned whether the signatories to the treaty are enamoured of it. At any moment the sticking paper may come unstuck. Already there are reports that the peace is, after all, only an armistice; Gaffer George (who brings a dowry) must be circumspect in

his wooing or the timid Mother Hubbard will be off again in a huff. Meanwhile, Uncle Simon sits brooding and reluctant, with we dare not guess what bitterness in his heart. It is all rather like a pantomime, and the country's taste for pantomime is declining.

THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

Absorption in our domestic politics may cause the Summary of the proceedings of the Imperial Conference, published in the Press on Monday, to receive much less attention than its great importance deserves. Speaking generally, it shows that not only were fiscal concessions made to the Dominions, but there also was a remarkable political concession or admission, for the Dominions were given the power to negotiate treaties independently, subject to no more than an expression of opinion by the Conference that no treaty should be negotiated by any Government of the Empire without due consideration of its possible effect on other parts of the Empire, and without obtaining the views of the other Empire Governments. This matter must now be regarded as settled, but we think there would have been much comment on it but for our own acute political situation. We know not how the problems of Empire Defence were tackled by the Conference. The Summary indicates a certain concern for the defence of Britain, particularly for the maintenance of an adequate Home Defence Air Force, but it is strangely silent on the definite part to be played in Empire Defence by the Dominions. What is clear is that the very heavy and utterly disproportionate burden of defence is still to be borne by the harassed British taxpayer.

THE CONDITION OF THE REICH

So far Dr. Stresemann has been lucky. The Ludendorff-Hitler coup in Munich proved to be a complete fiasco. But if Ludendorff had been supported by von Kahr and von Lossow the upshot might have been very different, for in that event they would probably have carried the Reichswehr and the police with them, the result being civil war and all Germany thrown into confusion worse confounded. According to the Paris Press the signs of a revolution against the Government of the Reich are being multiplied throughout Germany, but the truth appears to be that the Stresemann administration is in tolerably firm control of much the greater part of the country. Nothing approaching the "imminent disintegration" of the Reich can be discerned at the moment. The Monarchist reaction is not so marked as it was, thanks to Ludendorff's failure, and if the Communists are active they do not seem to be gaining ground. The economic aspect of Germany is now much worse than the political, bad as that is.

AD NAUSEAM

Having driven the United States to abandon as "wholly useless and futile" the restricted expert investigation of Germany's capacity to pay to which he had agreed, M. Poincaré, through M. Barthou of the Reparations Commission, has now the hardihood to suggest the setting up of a still more restricted expert inquiry. Washington has, of course, intimated that it will take no part in such a business. M. Poincaré's attitude has had the natural result of alienating American opinion from him, but for the present this cannot affect the reparations question, which is dominated as before by the military strength of France. In a striking letter published in Thursday's *Times*, General Smuts puts the case for a full conference of the Allies and America, with or without France; but there is no getting away from that big French army. In response to the German Note of October 24, declaring the willingness but inability of Germany to make payments, the Reparations Commission has decided to hear her representatives. While Sir John Bradbury, for Britain, assented to the decision, he stated frankly that he did not anticipate any practical results. And so the thing goes on!

THE AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE

Has the Ambassadors' Conference lost its usefulness? To say nothing of the far from impartial line this Conference took regarding Italy and Greece over the Corfu indemnity, this question comes to the front at present by reason of the fact that Germany has refused to assure the safety of the inter-Allied Commission of Military Control—in other words, she has declined to comply with the demand of the Conference for the re-establishment of the commission on her soil. This means that whatever is now done in this matter must be done by the interested Powers, not by the Conference. What, then, is the use of the Conference? Another thing that is being handled, or mishandled, by it is the return of the ex-Crown Prince to Germany, the significance of which seems to us to be exaggerated. Indeed, it may be asked whether the Allies have any right now to interfere with the movements of "Little Willie," or even of his father, for the truth is that they shirked taking the proper course at the proper time concerning these people.

A GREAT JUDGE

Mr. Justice Darling's retirement from the Bench, where he has laboured so diligently and brilliantly for over a quarter of a century, means a real loss not only to the administration of the law in this country but to the more polished amenities of public life. We have very few wits in the official world in England, and we can ill afford to be deprived of those *scintillæ juris* with which Sir Charles Darling was wont to enlighten the somewhat dull routine of the Law Courts. In addition to this his career has won for him very great distinction as a criminal lawyer; and it would be a graceful act if His Majesty, in addition to the promotion to the House of Lords which will be his almost inevitable reward, were to decorate him with the Order of Merit as a tribute to his intellectual distinction.

INDIA'S UNLEARNED LESSON

The constitutional experiment in India gave the "politically minded" in that country certain opportunities, and the elections now in progress show how little they have learned to use them. As regards the share which Indians, in part from a still earlier date, have in the Executive Councils, it is plain that they are indifferent how Provincial Ministers are chosen. The Provincial part of the experiment has thus completely failed in an essential. As regards the Imperial Assembly, there is an active enough scramble for entry, though complete abstention still has some noteworthy adherents, but the competition is not between men with rival domestic policies. Indeed, if one were to be guided by electioneering speeches and literature, one would be forced to the absurd conclusion that a country of some three hundred million inhabitants had no domestic problems at all. Feeling runs high, but only over questions of which Kenya is the type, and over ignoble religious feuds. There is no trace of a Party programme covering the general internal needs of the country, no sign that India has begun to learn the alphabet of Parliamentary government.

HELP FOR THE FARMERS

In our issue of last week we urged on our farmers, before condemning the Government, to wait a little longer for its proposals in aid of their industry. They have not had to wait more than a few days. On Wednesday, Sir Robert Sanders, the Minister of Agriculture, speaking at Cirencester, stated that, if returned to power, the Government will give a subsidy of £1 an acre for all arable land, but subject to the condition that a minimum wage of 30s. a week will be paid to the farm labourer by those applying for the subsidy. It has been evident for some time that arable farming would cease in this country unless the farmers obtained some relief from the State, and it should be noted

that the Government's proposals embody one of the alternative schemes put forward by the National Farmers' Union and the National Farmers' Union of Scotland. These schemes, it should also be noted, for it is important, were put forward before the present tense domestic political situation developed, and antedated Mr. Baldwin's announcement about tariffs. We hope the farmers will work for the party that is working for them.

OUR PART IN PALESTINE

That our Government did its utmost to obtain the co-operation of the Arabs in Palestine is made abundantly clear by the White Paper, just issued, setting forth the correspondence between the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner. Three successive proposals for inducing the Arabs to associate themselves in the administration of the country were rejected by them, in spite of the fact that these proposals embodied considerable concessions. Our Government feels that it can go no farther; it is bound by the Mandate, which is based on the Balfour letter of November, 1917, to administer Palestine; and it is going to administer it, as is stated in the dispatch telegraphed to Sir Herbert Samuel last Saturday, and published in the White Paper. Nothing else is possible in the circumstances. Meanwhile, a new Arab Party has been formed in Jerusalem, and is said to be less intransigent than the party which rejected the three proposals. We do not doubt that the firm action of our Government will lead, before long, to a more reasonable attitude on the part of the Arabs generally.

SECURITY IN THE AIR

We understand that the Dominion Premiers were much impressed by what they saw at Croydon Aerodrome last Saturday. Economically it is perfectly feasible for each Dominion to establish and maintain its own air force, and we therefore consider all the more unsatisfactory the Imperial Conference's pious resolution in favour of a strong aerial arm coupled with the arrangement whereby the home country is apparently to bear the main burden of its upkeep. The Dominions have been granted equality with the Mother Country: equal partnership ought to mean equal responsibilities. The Burney airship scheme is said to be going through, and we hope that it—like Empire Wireless—may not be longer delayed. In the matter of aerial defence, Lord Beatty spoke strongly and wisely last week, when he urged the absolute necessity of the Navy having its own separate air arm. This is the view which we have constantly upheld.

THE WORKERS' LEISURE

Certain London workers have lately struck for an extra half-hour for their midday meal, and they will be encouraged by learning that the French Academy of Medicine, which has been studying British conditions at second hand, has condemned the brevity of the British workers' luncheon interval. In France the customary interval extends to two hours, which enables most workers to go home for the meal instead of taking it in an eating-house, and the Academy of Medicine has come to the very natural conclusion that for French workers the French system is the most suitable. But, then, the French breakfast is not the British, the luncheon is not taken at the same time of day as the British workers', and there is less waste of time during the hours when the worker is not at lunch. We fear the British toiler is not entitled to cite the French Academy of Medicine in his favour without approximating in habits to the French.

ECTOPLASMORRHEA

A certain Mrs. Tomson, of the Church of Spiritual Illumination, Brooklyn, U.S., has been detected in the act of foisting bogus spiritualistic phenomena on the members of a séance. It appears that when one of

the sitters applied his teeth to the shoulder of an alleged spirit the apparition fled groaning from the room, leaving the too adventurous sitter with his mouth full of "ectoplasm." On examination the "ectoplasm" was found to be thin silken fabric. The SATURDAY REVIEW has dealt faithfully with these ectoplasmic manifestations in the past. This is but another demonstration of the fact that more than ocular proof is required to establish the genuineness of spiritualist phenomena. "Get your teeth into it" might be a wise slogan for investigators.

THE NOBEL PRIZE

If it is good, as Burns suggested, "to see ourselves as others see us," we shall have to readjust our views before we can accept as the greatest among our writers of to-day Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, and Mr. W. B. Yeats. While we heartily congratulate Mr. Yeats on the European recognition which the winning of a Nobel Prize implies, we can only reflect with some amazement on the different aspect our literature presents to the Swedish experts and to ourselves. One name absent from this short list looms very large in our minds; and when we compare Mr. Yeats's achievement with that of his predecessor of ten years ago, we begin to wonder on what principle the selection is made.

TURBOT

In a Note last week on a typical English dinner the fish recommended was turbot, a fish universally esteemed but very often improperly treated. Almost everything, especially when the fish is sliced instead of being cooked whole, depends on avoidance of a long interval between the cooling of the fish and its appearance at table. If allowed to stand for even half an hour after cooling, it loses its delicacy of flavour and toughens, besides becoming unsightly through crumbling. To eat turbot to perfection, it ought to be served the instant it is cool, when cold turbot is desired, or otherwise while it is thoroughly hot and without the elaboration of garnish too often adopted for hot turbot.

THE FIGHT FOR CONSERVATISM

WITH Mr. Baldwin's decision in favour of an immediate appeal to the country, all the heart-searchings among Conservatives in or out of Parliament as to the tactical aspect of the lead he gave to the party at Plymouth, on which we commented last week, have, we trust, received their quietus. Three weeks hence a new Parliament will have been elected, and there is only one thing to be done meanwhile, to see that the fight for Conservatism goes forward to a successful issue, by a concentration of all the Conservative forces in support of the Government. The measure of Mr. Baldwin's wisdom in seeking a new mandate from the electorate at once, and not even waiting till after the New Year, as was thought more likely no longer than a week ago, is the plain discomfort of his political opponents. Liberal and Labour leaders alike have loudly proclaimed their resentment at being "rushed" into a conflict at the polls in this precipitate way. Why they should make this a grievance if they were at all confident of victory it would be difficult to say. So far as the Liberal Party is concerned, "reunited" now under the banner of Free Trade, with Mr. Asquith (or should we rather say, Mrs. Asquith?) and Mr. Lloyd George reconciled to each other, they ought to be delighted at the prospect of being challenged on the very ground on which they profess to think they are strongest. Yet, strange to say, they are thoroughly annoyed, and we have all the Liberal and Labour platforms ringing with abuse of the dishonesty of "the Tories" for forcing an issue on which at the same time we are told that both sections of the Opposition are confident that they can win. For

our own part, we think that Mr. Baldwin has taken a simple and straightforward course, which needs no apology. As we have said ever since the Plymouth speech, it made an early General Election inevitable, and further consideration last week showed that nothing but mischief could ensue from postponing it when once this was realized. What is thoroughly satisfactory too, is that the most cheering reports have come in to the Conservative Central Office since Tuesday, as to the excellent heart with which the supporters of the Government are going into the fight in all parts of the country.

What is it then that is really going to be decided when the polling-day arrives? In our opinion, there need be no fear of the result if the fundamental issue before the voters is firmly and unmistakably put; and we have no fear ourselves because we are certain that it will become crystal clear to the nation at large by the time the ballot-papers have to be marked in favour either of the Conservative, the Liberal or the Labour candidates. A good deal more will, no doubt, have been heard before December 6, from the speeches that will be made in amplification of the respective party programmes, but in substance we do not believe that anything that can be said on that score can alter what, in its essentials, the real issue now is and must continue to be. It is simply this—does the country want to maintain the Conservative Government in power, or does it want to hand over the charge of its destinies to the Labour Party? If a majority of our people are anxious for a Capital Levy, Communistic schemes for the "nationalization" of industry, and a foreign policy which, besides entailing an open quarrel with France, would be dominated by the peculiar tenderness of affection cherished by the Socialist Party, not merely for Germany, but for most of the agitating riff-raff of Europe and Asia, they will, of course, vote for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his followers. But most people who are not so blind to the national interests as to do that will continue to rally, as they did a year ago and as the by-elections since the Spring have shown that they have done since, to the Conservative flag. The closer we get to the polling-day the clearer will it be, in our opinion, to everyone who has the responsibility of a vote, whether man or woman, that the danger of putting a Labour-Socialist Government in power, with a policy that must be ruinous to us both at home and abroad, is what really dominates the issue at this election. And let no Conservative think for a moment that anything but the largest poll that Mr. Baldwin's supporters can secure will suffice to avert that danger; for the Labour-Socialists will certainly put all their own forces into the field, and we know what their strength was a year ago. This is not a moment when any slackness on the part of Conservative voters can have a vestige of excuse or justification.

But, it may be said, is not this view of the situation rather an ignoring of the fact that the verdict of the country is being directly asked on Mr. Baldwin's policy of Protection? And what about the Liberal Party? Well, we admit that we are addressing ourselves to Conservatives. We see no prospect, in any case, of a Free Trade Liberal majority at these elections. Mr. Baldwin's proposals, on their own account, seem to us, moreover, such as Conservative Free Traders can support, as indeed they are doing, without prejudice to their older views. But it is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald himself who has boasted that the controversy between Protection and Free Trade is not now the real issue. He is asking the country to decide between the full Labour programme and what he regards as an obsolete economic system in the shape of Capitalism, upheld by Liberals and Tories alike, over the fine shades of which, as represented by the differences between Free Trade and Protection, he is quite content to leave them to fight each other. Here then is the real enemy, and the more fully this is recognized the more decisive, we trust, will be the victory for Conservatism.

A Pilgrim's Progress

London, November 15

IN spite of the political commotion and excursions and alarms consequent on Mr. Baldwin's announcement of a Dissolution, I cannot help feeling that the event of the past week has been Mr. Justice Darling's retirement from the Bench. It was so suddenly and quietly done that even those who know him well were taken by surprise. The doing of it was, indeed, a pattern of the manner in which such things should be done, and was in remarkable contrast to the usual method adopted by men prominent in public life. Not a word of his intention was breathed to a soul until the day on which his resignation was announced; the next day he had heard his last case; the next, made his formal farewell; and so retired into private life. It is unthinkable that the nation will not continue to enjoy the benefit of his great legal experience in the House of Lords; but in the meantime he is lost to the ordinary world of law, and the loss is a severe one.

I remember very well the first time I ever saw him—more than twenty years ago, when a friend took me into the Old Bailey, and said, "You must certainly see Darling, he is the greatest criminal judge we have." Whether that was or was not the fact then, it became the fact very soon afterwards, and has continued to be a fact ever since. The impression produced on my young mind on that day remained for years through which I never set eyes on him; was confirmed when I sat beside him at a public dinner some six or seven years later; and has been most happily continued ever since, through the years when I have known him not only as a judge but as a friend. The word "distinguished" is applied to almost every public man of any notoriety, but I know no one in public life to-day to whom it can be so justly applied as it is to Sir Charles Darling. He is as distinguished in his person as he is in his mind; and he is quite unique in the particular combination of qualities that go to make this distinction. French and Scottish by descent, he is above all things individual. His intellect is governed by a kind of fetish of good manners; and his manners are salted by an intellectual quality that is Gallic in character.

Lawyers will no doubt be offended with me when I say that a wit in the legal world is a *rara avis*. Almost all lawyers are supposed to be witty; hardly one of them is; the level of humour as expressed at the Bar is lamentably low, as, indeed, one would expect of minds which are continually adapted to the mental level of juries. Sir Charles Darling, therefore, is remarkable in that he is a wit among lawyers, rather than a lawyer among wits; and he is the only Judge of a whole generation of whom this can be said. But in saying it one must also defend him against the kind of reputation which the newspapers sought to fasten upon him—the reputation of one who made jokes on every occasion, and who turned legal proceedings into a farce. I have heard him conduct dozens of trials, and I can testify that I have never once heard him make a joke that was in bad taste, or ever treat lightly the serious and often grim business before him; or ever, in those terrible issues of life and death with which a criminal court is constantly concerned, utter one word that could detract from the solemnity of the work upon which the court was engaged. What he really did was to illuminate the rather dreary body of legal procedure with flashes of humanity and humour in an atmosphere that is often sadly lacking in both; and, by his habit of going directly to the point, of being simple where smaller people were being complex, to bring the law into the circle of ordinary human intelligence, and, incidentally, win for it the sympathy and understanding of the plain and often stupid citizen. Delicious things he continually said, but they were said in seconds amid hours of dreary mechanical routine.

The somnolent reporter, sitting in his dusty pew, naturally took down every word of these humorous utterances, and often, no doubt, tried to surround them with their proper context of dreariness; but the blue pencil of the sub-editor would cut out everything but the jest, with the result that by people who never attended courts of law Sir Charles Darling has come to be regarded as one who made a joke of the law. Nothing could be more absurd, as I have already explained. But when five hours of argument and evidence are boiled down into one paragraph in an evening paper it is not surprising that the real proportion of things should be somewhat obscured in the process.

Apart from his friends, who know how to value the charm and brightness of his mind, the public should know of Sir Charles Darling that he is above all things a great criminal judge. It is said of him that when he was appointed to the Bench one of his colleagues expressed to him surprise and even consternation, and that Darling said to him, "I do not know why people should make such a fuss; I can read and write." Whether that story be true or not (I had it from Mr. Birrell—Sir Charles has no remembrance of it) it is really rather appropriate, because the great contribution that he has made to the practice of criminal law has been the application to it of commonsense and humanity. Some of his judgments have been daring, and they have constantly been challenged; but they have stood the searching test of the Court of Criminal Appeal, and as a body they constitute a valuable contribution to criminal law.

For me, as for so many of my generation, the Old Bailey will never be the same again without that slender and rather exquisite figure sitting in scarlet in the great chair under the suspended sword, so conscious of the surroundings, so well aware of their dramatic value, so alert to expose the frequent stupidity and the rare humour of what is, upon the whole, a very dreary environment, so quick to recognize and detect imposture, so ready to protect the unprotected, so ultimately wise in the exercise either of the severe or merciful prerogative of justice. The merry eyes, the sad mouth, the sensitive hands, the alert mind—happily they are with us still, although they will no longer be seen in their old surroundings. Long may they remain with us; and true may our tribute be to one who has done his day's work and earned an even-tide of honour and repose.

FILSON YOUNG

ON HAVING NOTHING TO DO

By G. S. STREET

ONE begins writing on a theme of this sort with an uneasy expectation of finding, when one has finished, that some other writer has said it all before, only better. One may even find that one has said it all oneself twenty years ago. That, I think, would be a legitimate repetition. One's old readers are dead or have forgotten, new readers have arrived who cannot be expected to burrow in one's old books of collected essays and ought not to lose the advantage of one's wit and wisdom. Only the repetition must be unconscious: a deliberate rivalry with a dead self would be a morbid business. As for other predecessors than myself I must take my chance. I am not to be prevented from analysing an unpleasant state of mind and, while I do so, putting an end to it.

Really to have nothing to do is the devil. I do not mean being able to live without definite calling or profession. That is a condition, publicly despised (in these days) and secretly envied, which may be delightful. Nor do I mean merely not being obliged to do anything at a particular time: you may be set free to enjoy yourself. I mean not being able to see or imagine at a given moment and for the immediate future anything you want to do, anything you *can* do with any sort of pleasure or profit.

It will be said that such an inability is a weakness. I wonder if the strongest people have not felt it at times. It does not mean, I am sure, a want of vitality. On the contrary it is when vitality is strong that one is faced with it, for it is then that one is exigent of life and not easily contented with simulacra of thought or work. When vitality is lowest one is content with the easiest way of passing the time. The work I do for my bread is fitful in its incidence; on some days there is a great deal of it, on others nothing, and I do not know in advance whether I shall find much or little or nothing when I arrive at my appointed place of labour. Arriving there and finding no work to do I am content, when vitality is very low, to sit in an arm-chair and read 'Who's Who,' or 'Whitaker's Almanack' until something haply may turn up, rather pleased than otherwise there should be no demand on my energy. But when I arrive with the highest vitality vouchsafed to me in my declining years, eager to work, to earn my living, to make up for many too idle years—when I arrive in that condition and find no work to do, I am really unhappy. 'Who's Who' is of no service to me, nor is 'Whitaker's Almanack,' nor the leading article I should not have read if I had anything else to do. I pace the floor, I cry out on the perversity of things. It is the better not the worse I who feel this cursed inability and inhibition. If I am not one of those strong ones of the earth who revel in hard work, I like to do some daily, and to do none, unless on a professed holiday, gives me a troublesome feeling that neither should I eat. I cannot say to myself with Catullus:

Otio exultas nimiumque gestis.

Quite the contrary. But it is at my best, as I said, that enforced idleness is irksome in itself and the less easy of escape by the invention of employment. At such a time I crave for something really worth doing and so I contend that having nothing to do, in my sense, is not a weakness of vitality.

But in that case, says the objector, it is a stupidity. Nothing to do? Good heavens! Have you seen all the pictures on view in London, read all the books you want, or at any rate ought to read? The objector must be reasonable. We live in a world of many difficulties in the way of our wishes. It may be raining heavily and one may be afraid of wet feet and unable to go to the National Gallery. Or one may have to stay in a room equipped with 'Who's Who' and 'Whitaker's Almanack' alone. Or even if at home, with one's small collection of books available, I contend again that the more alive and active one is feeling the less easily is one satisfied. Reading a book one has read before is often, of course, a great enjoyment, but it is one for tired hours, not for those which should be active. It is a sort of browsing of the mind, not a full employment of it. One has already formed a judgment, and the critical intelligence is to be better stirred by something new even though immeasurably inferior to something old. I do not pretend that I read Shakespeare through every year and do not deny that I might benefit by doing so; I merely affirm that in my nothing-to-do state, if I were to read at all, it might be something new, something with some lure of curiosity if nothing more. Well, it is possible not to have a new book, unread, on the premises, and even if I could go out to buy or borrow one I may not think of one I am disposed to read. I have grown wary of reviewers and their eulogies, which seem to me to be earned more lightly than they were formerly, and those contemporary authors on whom more or less I can rely do not publish every week. Has the objector anything else to suggest?

Not, I trust, correspondence. The letters you write merely for something to do are, ten to one, wasted or worse. You take up some matter which need not concern you and it recoils upon you in busier hours. You try to explain some speech or action which has offended another and make it far worse. How should you not? Even face to face with the advantages of

facial expression, tones of voice and personal interaction, you would probably do no good, and how should you with all the aids to misunderstanding of diverse meanings and emphasis attached to different phrases and words? I know a young man who had a difference with a lady he was engaged to marry. Being apart from her and having nothing to do he wrote a letter to justify his view. He prided himself on his style. His letter was (he thought) kind, understanding, pathetic, manly, generous. It was unanswered and (still having nothing to do) he wrote others and finally one so kind, so pathetic, so manly, so generous that the lady not only broke off the marriage but has never spoken to him since.

No, it is the devil this having nothing to do. It means really wasting time, and that is a sad thing as your years recede. Idling is not a waste of time if you enjoy it, just as extravagance is not of necessity a waste of money. A bottle of bad wine is a waste of money, but a bottle of good wine never is, though it may be an extravagance to buy it or unwisdom to drink it. It is the idleness which you reprobate and dislike that is the real waste of time, and that is the meaning of having nothing to do. I think it should excuse you, even if it drove you to writing an article like this.

THE SURVIVAL OF OLD MASTERS

BY TANCRED BORENIUS

THE work of Rembrandt has, on many occasions, provided a jumping-off ground for extravagant theories: was there not one German "expert" who, some years ago, proved to his own and many other people's satisfaction that the 'Night Watch' was not by Rembrandt at all, but by Ferdinand Bol, and signed by the latter several times over? The latest recruit to the ranks of writers on Rembrandt, Mr. John C. Van Dyke, has already caused a considerable flutter in the dovecotes, and the theories which he propounds are certainly startling enough. Only some fifty pictures, out of the seven hundred odd that are nowadays assigned to him, more or less by general consent, are acknowledged by Mr. Van Dyke as being by Rembrandt himself: the others are either described as being "Rembrandt shop pictures," or are divided up among a number of his pupils, both such as can be named and others who have so far remained anonymous. The whole question is, of course, one of considerable interest far beyond the narrow circle of specialists, and as Mr. Van Dyke pleads his cause on a, numerically at any rate, very impressive series of data, his theories deserve to be discussed at some length, also from a more general standpoint.

At the outset there is one difficulty in believing that Rembrandt could only have painted fifty surviving pictures: and that is the extraordinary, untiring industry of Rembrandt. Of various great artists we know that they had many other interests besides their art: Velazquez the courtier, Rubens the diplomatist, Leonardo the man of science, all supply sufficient explanations why the number of "autograph" pictures by them should be so small. The case of Rembrandt is different: he cared for nothing but his art, and even going round the antique shops of Amsterdam, or attending sales in order to make high bids "for the sake of the dignity of art," cannot have seriously curtailed the time he spent in his studio. The career of Rembrandt extends over a period of more than forty years, roughly from 1626 to 1669. Now, as in those lists of Rembrandt's pictures which bring the number of his extant works up to the figure of more than seven hundred, little sketchy heads, thrown off in an hour or two, appear as units, it would probably not be too much to assume that Rembrandt painted, say, forty or fifty "pictures"—large and small, sketches and finished compositions—a year. We thus get to about two thousand as the likely number of

pictures painted by Rembrandt: and hence, seven hundred pictures are still but a fraction of what Rembrandt probably did paint. Just think of the thousands of indubitably authentic pictures by a prolific modern master—the late M. Renoir—that are in existence!

It is doubtless the case that, at certain periods in the past, the prestige of Rembrandt was considerably on the wane, and a good many of his works have very likely perished through neglect, in addition to the havoc wrought by fire or accidents. But against this should be set that there must have existed people to whom the pictorial qualities of Rembrandt's art made their appeal, even when the verdict of fashion on these pictures was as depreciatory, and their market value as ridiculously low, as they undoubtedly were at times. At no moment in history does there, fortunately, seem to have been a complete lack of people having the courage to say, "This may not be art that is highly thought of; but I like it." And so many a Rembrandt continued to exist in obscure and unsuspected ownership. The same applies, for instance, to the works of Frans Hals—they are now gradually emerging into daylight again. And though many recently discovered Rembrandts may not have much of a "pedigree," it should, on the other hand, be remembered that there exist records of a long series of indubitable Rembrandts which cannot be traced at present.

But to come to closer grips with Mr. Van Dyke's argument, the line generally taken by him is to assign works hitherto recognized as Rembrandt's to pupils, on the strength of certain features of style, to which parallels may be found in authenticated works by the pupils in question. The results of this reasoning are, however, vitiated by an insufficient recognition of the fact that the work and genius of Rembrandt formed, as it were, one vast and marvellous store of artistic wealth, which was there for all comers to draw upon. According to the period of Rembrandt's career, during which his several pupils were apprenticed to him, they reflect in their art different aspects of the work of the great *chef d'école* round whom they all centred. Now, Mr. Van Dyke reproduces, alongside of one another, indubitable works by Rembrandt's pupils, and kindred works by Rembrandt himself which, on the strength of these affinities, are claimed as being by those pupils: whereas in the vast majority of cases, a glance is sufficient to tell you that each of the two juxtaposed pictures belongs to a wholly different world of art, that one is the source and the other the derivative. Mr. Van Dyke has been very painstaking, and has brought together a vast material which illustrates with great clearness which models at a given time were posing in Rembrandt's studio, or how certain features of the master's style were being gradually disseminated. Only, in using this material, you must be careful to disregard about fifty per cent. of the letterpress of the illustrations.

No doubt many a picture now held to be a Rembrandt will, at some future time, be proved not to be one: knowledge in these matters must, by its nature, be ever-progressive. But the broad fact of the matter remains, that, as regards mere numbers, so far from there being too many Rembrandts in the world, there are still far too few of them. And the same applies to the works of the Old Masters generally. In the library of the British Museum there exists a MS. catalogue of a collection of pictures by the great Venetian masters, belonging to one Andrea Vendramin of Venice, in 1627, that is, some fifty years after the death of Titian: one hundred and fifty-five of the pictures are reproduced in this catalogue, by pen and ink sketches, and how many do you think can be identified as existing at present?—only four. No more striking illustration could be quoted of the limitations to which our knowledge of the Old Masters is still subjected, and of the prizes which, when every allowance has been made for the destruction caused by time and accidents, yet await the patient investigator.

PORRIDGE AND CREAM

The Little Minister. By J. M. Barrie. Queen's Theatre.

By IVOR BROWN

STUDENTS of the drama, seeking Barrie without tears, are recommended to make or renew acquaintance with 'The Little Minister'; not that the Rev. Gavin Dishart is a gentleman of any quality or character, but simply because his story affords an epitome of Barrie's work, comprehending the first and last things, the superb sense of Scottish type and the inordinate pre-occupation with the elvish. When Thomas Whamond looks Lady Babbie in the face, Barrie's strength stares Barrie's weakness out of countenance. If only Barrie had remained a Scottish dramatist, what a masterpiece might he not have hewn from his native granite! If Thomas Whamond and the elders of Thrums do not convince, one has only to take a turn down Shaftesbury Avenue and see the first act of 'What Every Woman Knows.' This is the real and the great Barrie, on whom the English and the fairies have made such fatal incursions.

Barrie is that oddity, a Scot beaten by the English. True the English victory has been expensive and to the vanquished must have come considerable treasure. But Barrie has never gone on from Thomas Whamond to be the great comic dramatist of his country; Lady Babbie has lured him into fairyland, a rich land but another's.

A charming and loquacious Irishman, whose pride it was to carry the literary gossip of Dublin on the tip of his tongue, once explained to me that Mr. Shaw is ill thought of in the Irish capital; he is held to have let Ireland down: no Irishman can now be taken seriously by the English till he has given a performance of Shavian antics. That was the indictment, to my mind a foolish one, but interesting because it reveals the danger of distrust that besets the successful emigrant. Barrie has come up from Thrums as Shaw has come up from Dublin to the elegance of Adelphi Terrace. Shaw has left nothing behind, because his drama was never national. But Barrie has left Rob Dow and Snecky and Nanny Webster, and I, as a Scot, resent this gross desertion as I resent the skimble-skamble metaphysics and the ethical hanky-panky of the later, Anglicized, and degenerate Barrie. Good, stiff philosophy has ever been a notable Scottish export and Englishmen in search of a rich Glasgow accent have long been well advised to look for it in the lecture-rooms of Oxford, where young men from the north expounded with a grave roll of consonants the good, the real, and the true. A stiff-necked breed are we, contemptuous of fancy goods; and who can deny that Barrie, over whom suburbia licks its chops as the quaint little Scot, has been getting steadily more "fancy" as the inherent logic of his race thawed away under southern suns?

'The Little Minister' accordingly is for remembrance. The good Scottish porridge is there, though of course it has been soured in alien cream. But honest oats there still were in 1897, and the Barrie drama had not been reduced to what the advertisers call "a dainty breakfast dish." The outline of the elders is tremendous and the façade of Thomas Whamond looms over the flimsy trifle called Lady Babbie with an architectural mass and majesty that are unforgettable. Mr. Norman McKinnel is, of course, the very man for Thomas; he has the bulk and sinew and intellectual violence of this mighty man of Scotland and Jehovah. He has too a rare knowledge of the tongue and a right relish for the idiom of Scottish humour; he made the play his own, as it was his duty to do, for Thomas is pure truth and the Reverend Dishart is pure judge. Mr. Owen Nares made Dishart duly judge-like, lithe, ingenuous, companionable, soft-hearted, and soft-headed, a scandal to the kirk in which Thomas worshipped. He made no effort to be Scottish and he employed the accent of the Home Counties, unabashed. Mr. McKinnel fairly

crushed him with the tonnage and poundage of veracity; that was inevitable, for Thomas is one of Barrie's men and Dishart is a fair specimen of Barrie's make-believe. Miss Fay Compton gambolled through the part of Lady Babbie prettily enough; the business of being a mad-cap with one foot in Debreth and the other in cloud-cuckoo-land, calls rather for an affectation of polite impishness than for any serious acting. Miss Compton was gracefully impish, but it is a part for Mary Pickford.

'The Little Minister,' fortunately, is a play without a message; one of its characters is beautifully described as being in the view of Thrums "just English." So is this "just a play" without any counsel, salt or sugary, for the better guidance of our souls. It is, on the other hand, no simple essay in chromatic romance; for while Lady Babbie is as rosy as an oleograph of blushing youth, the elders are as grey as winter skies and compose as natural a study in melancholic "humours" as ever the realistic drama produced. All the time, accordingly, there is a double strain on the attention; there is the arduous delight of keeping up with the Robs and Sneekies (the Scottish spoken by Mr. Walter Roy and Mr. Robert Drysdale in these parts is sound enough to be difficult for ears unused) and there is the curiosity as to what fantastic nonsense will be the next escapade of Lady Babbie as she drags her little minister in blissful captivity. What is a producer to do with an egg so plainly double-yolked? Mr. Basil Dean has performed a surgical operation and cut the play in two. The elders are as elderly as may be and stalk with the measured gravity of realism across the woods of Cadoan and through the streets of Thrums; the youngsters are turned out fancy-free to be as airy and delicate and unlike life as anything we know. When the two sides meet there is distinctly a clash of styles; but they do not clash often; the dramatist's technical cunning has seen to that. Even the most resentful Scot can never deny to Barrie a mastery of such workmanship and strategy.

For the production Mr. Dean has made use of a device that is apparently very dear to him, since he has now had it installed in two theatres under his control. This is the Schwabe-Hasait lighting system which enables him to produce changeable scenery (in this case changeable weather) without any scurrying of scene-shifters and consequent irritations of delay. The sky over Caddan Woods becomes a movable feast of demure colouring and, from a purely photographic point of view, the clouds which move across the back-cloth are a considerable achievement in the art of counterfeit. They add nothing to dramatic values: they do indeed detract from the total effect by turning the eye and the mind from the play and the players to the pursuit of meteorological observation. "A slight depression moving eastward from the Hebrides causing local showers" one murmured, only to correct oneself as an anti-cyclone seemed to be definitely established over Thrums. Such verisimilitude, which is never quite variety, is hardly worth while. Why not leave it to the "movies"? To the more durable scenery, designed by Mr. George W. Harris, compliment is due; this artist continually brings to our stage a nice sense of architectural design and is particularly successful in the use he makes of isolated trees slenderly silhouetted against backgrounds of radiant light. Not very Thrumsian was his sky over the Manse, reminiscent rather of Samarkand; but just the canopy for Lady Babbie.

CHILDREN AND BOOKS

By YOI

IN the world of children there is as great a diversity of taste in books as there is in the world of grown people, though all children agree in liking an encyclopædia, and there are many older persons who never

look inside any book of information other than Burke's 'County Families.' All children are wise enough to desire to learn, but many who have passed childhood are so blindly ignorant that they think they know enough. In the publishers' lists of books for children there is often a division made—books for babies, books for girls, and books for boys. The division for babies is certainly a useful guide because under the age of five years quite a definite form of literature is necessary. For this group the letters are printed in a large type, though why it is difficult to understand, as children at that age usually have their books read aloud to them, and no publisher ought to encourage parents in allowing their children to learn to read too soon. But the pictures and the stories they tell must be direct and simple, never wandering from—if you like—the crude artlessness of the story of the ten little nigger boys into fields of elaborate fairy tale. A baby wants a story and a picture of something funny and something easy to understand.

The division, however, of girls' and boys' books is, no doubt, made for those who have no children of their own and believe that a book for a girl must be about girls, and a book for a boy about sailors and engines. But boys and girls are only grown-up people in miniature; and if their outlook on life is a little fresher, their likes and dislikes are the same as they will be when they are in the thirties and the forties. Many a little girl pores over the details of the sailing of a four-master while her brother is busy reading of the jealousies and thrills of a girls' school. At any rate, the division is arbitrary and useless—almost as useless as the division of their books from those of their parents. A child who wishes to read will never be kept in check by any rules; he will wander from his own shelf to the highest shelf in the largest library. Everything that is a book will interest him, and the knowledge that he gleans will be useful to him all his life through, for it will be gained from his own desire to know and from his own seeking for beauty. The children who read from mere pleasure in the beauty of description or delight in poetry may be rare, but they are not as rare as we believe. They ought to be allowed to browse on well-filled shelves and to choose their own books; allowed, in fact, a freedom to do so even if we may sometimes doubt if the book chosen is what may be called "a child's book." There are few books as a rule in our libraries that could hurt a child; if those few are a little more outspoken than we may wish, they are less likely to harm him than the companionship of some of his friends. If a child has been used to reading about life, not only from his own small outlook but as men and women read about it, he will come to no harm. His mind will only take in a part of what he reads; and if he cares to read, let us say, Rousseau's 'Confessions' or 'Tom Jones,' who is to decide that these can hurt him? We must realize that intelligent children are full of curiosity, but their curiosity is not continually morbid. They want to know about everything; by locking up books we cannot lock up their minds.

Let the library, then, be open to the child; let him read whatever he wants to read. Yet we must not be blind to the trend of his choice. If we find—and this is not very likely—that he goes from one book to another of a kind that we do not think is fit for him, we cannot then attempt to stop his further reading, but we can discuss with him the books he has read, giving reasons why we do not think that they are suitable for him; why, in fact, they are not true to life. Lucky are those children who have their training in a country rectory where, among the beauty of fields and woods, the New Testament, the Psalms, the Collects, are a definite part of their daily reading, where they learn the words of these by heart, to carry them in their hearts always, as beauty unsurpassed, holding a promise of beauty that may be theirs for ever.



MR. HERBERT AUSTIN

MR. JUSTICE DARLING

SIR RICHARD MUIR

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, NO. 73

SWEET CHARLES OF OLD BAILEY

By 'QUIZ'

Correspondence

M. CAILLAUX'S DEBUT

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT)

M CAILLAUX may not speak in, or even come to, Paris—although he is frequently there under pretence of having to cross from one station to another—but he travels a great deal in France and sees a great many people in various parts of the country. In fact, what had long been foreseen is now taking place. M. Caillaux is acting once more as the recognized leader of the Radical party. Yet it gave the public a shock to see him being received in state the other day by the Denain municipality and addressing the whole country from that coal black platform as if nothing had ever happened and the orator were not deprived of his civic rights. A few Sundays ago, the other political exile, Malvy, boldly appeared too at the inauguration of a monument to dead soldiers, but he had reason to rue his rashness in doing so, for he was severely handled by some Southern Royalists, whom Mussolini's laurels keep dangerously awake.

At Denain M. Caillaux, who is no coward, felt safe. More than half the population consists of miners, who control the municipal council and seem to have been not a little gratified to be chosen as first audience by such a distinguished replica of Catiline as M. Caillaux. So a great crowd assembled to hear the first address the orator had given in public for more than six years, and M. Caillaux held the floor during an hour without the least molestation. He evidently realized that he was addressing not merely a congenial Socialist audience but the whole country, already attentive to the prospects of the election, and he watched his words accordingly. The great danger, even in an audience consisting of Socialists, but living in the centre of a mining district almost as scientifically damaged by the Germans as the Lens coal pits were, would have been to speak of Germany with undue sympathy. M. Caillaux steered clear of that rock and devoted most of his speech to his familiar theses concerning the Income Tax which he would like to see so heavy on employers that it could be *nil* on employees, and to death duties, which he views as a convenient method of confiscation. Altogether he secured considerable success at Denain, which was nothing, and editorials in all the Press, which was important.

Madame Séverine, the veteran journalist, who has alternately charmed and irritated three generations by her succession of humane views and Utopian methods of making them prevail, was there and wrote her impressions of the speech and of the man. It was strange to see her struck by the fact that M. Caillaux did not look plebeian, as M. Briand—who always seems to be in his Sunday clothes—cannot help appearing. M. Caillaux, himself a rich man, is the son of a good family which he probably thinks even better than it was, and his pose has always been to pretend not to be conscious of the dashing manner to which the son of a financier has a right, and to be so absorbed in the workers' welfare that he neither notices their garlic breath nor the contrasts between their humility and his aristocratic demeanour.

Madame Séverine, who knows poor people well and has at times expressed their souls almost like a Russian writer, would do better to tell us why it is that at this time of day, and twenty-five years after having created a party of their own, Socialist miners should still appear to be so pleased with the collaboration of the well-to-do. The present writer saw the tendency once more, not long ago, at a by-election in a little town which he knows well. The bourgeois Radicals were in a minority at the first ballot and felt pretty sure of being thoroughly beaten the second Sunday, when they made up their minds to appeal to the grocer mayor of the next town, a Socialist. Help was immediately given in the shape of a poster admonishing the

camarades to be on their guard against reaction, and this decided the election. Of course, Socialists have become excellent politicians and realize that, in the pact recently concluded between their own chiefs and the Radical leaders, the latter are sure to be heavily let in, as they always have been—their success at one election always being the forerunner of a Socialist victory at the next election. But they do not dislike good clothes on an elegant figure, as a limited psychology wrongly imagines. The Socialist side in the Chamber shows better clothes and cleaner nails than the Radical section of pettifoggers and country doctors on the next tiers, and one Socialist deputy who tried to please his constituency by sitting in a smock frock was never returned again. My opinion is that workmen regard men like M. Caillaux in the way some communities regard the beneficent American millionaire, as providential freaks, incomprehensible but wonderful.

Another and more important problem is why M. Caillaux, who was banished by the Higher Court for "endangering the Alliances of France during the war," i.e., for cherishing his old plan of substituting a German *entente* for our Anglo-Saxon associations, should be popular, as he seems to be, in America and even in England, where his not very good copy is rather in demand. Probably this is another instance of Anglo-Saxon empiricism. M. Caillaux is to English and American Liberals what the German Socialists and the Rhine Separatists are to the French: some of his theses are immediately useful and are welcomed as such. But I do not think that a German Socialist who had, say, concocted some anti-French agreement with the Russian Bolsheviks, could send articles to the *Revue de Paris*. He would be considered dangerous, as M. Caillaux must inevitably be considered some day in England, for M. Caillaux is as difficult to handle as the most temperamental explosive. His conceit may place him above the annoyance of being regarded as useful, but the moment he realized that he was useful, his recoil would be inevitable and in a direction which no friends of ours would like.

Verse

ALLAH'S REBUKE

WHY strain the sinew, tire the wit, a mad horse
chafing on the bit?
The Rider only seeth it, the goal whereto He goeth,
fool!

Although thou canst not see His Face, astride upon
thee in the race
He draws the rein or speeds the pace whenas thy
nostril gloweth, fool!

A mane of silk, a burnished hide, an eyeball milky-
white and wide
But mock the steed that mocks the Guide toward the
goal He knoweth, fool!

And thou, a rebel to His Hand, by gusts of the sirocco
fanned,
Shalt perish nigh the drifts of sand whereon thy hot
foot goeth, fool!

Thou hast been angry, and thy teeth have been as iron
underneath
The flinty tongue, and all thy breath a flame whereon
one bloweth, fool!

Let not thy gusty anger gain dominion over thee and
strain

The grasp of Him that draws the rein to guide thee
where He knoweth, fool!

WILFRID THORLEY

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

MR. CHURCHILL'S BOOK

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In your review of Mr. Churchill's book, you return to the old charge against Lord Jellicoe—surely a worn-out theme nowadays?

As usual, there are absolutely no grounds for any of your statements. When did the Grand Fleet command resist an offensive policy at sea?

It is certain that Jellicoe pressed for an attack on Zeebrugge in 1914, and gave it as his opinion that "it would be by no means impossible to force an entrance to the Baltic." With the Dardanelles affair he had no connexion whatsoever—more's the pity! The suggestions subsequently made about the "dangerous division of forces" consequent upon the Battle Fleet being based on Scapa, are so palpably absurd that they hardly require refutation.

The Battle Fleet was not based at Rosyth, for the very good reason that there was no room for it, before the spring of 1917, by which time the outer booms, the construction of which involved immense difficulty and labour, were in position. It was based there by order of Jellicoe himself: and during Beatty's period of command, Scapa was constantly used by the Battle Fleet, and by individual squadrons.

Your reviewer also propounds the wholly new and entertaining theory that in naval warfare, battle-cruisers should always be in "visual touch" with the Main Fleet. I doubt if Admiral Beatty would subscribe to that view! As for the Jutland controversy itself, why don't they publish the Harper Report? And are there any grounds for supposing that, even if the bulk of the High Seas Fleet had been sent to the bottom, the war would have been won? Mr. Pollen has never produced any good ones.

I am, etc.,

ROBERT BOOTHBY

Guards Club, Brook Street, W.

[Our Reviewer writes:—

"Mr. Boothby makes two main contentions in his letter regarding the division of the Grand Fleet between Scapa and Rosyth. The first is that this arrangement was sound strategically. The second is that it was necessary owing to the absence of booms and works at Rosyth.

"Mr. Boothby's idea that the division was sound was not shared by Lord Fisher or Mr. Churchill, according to the evidence contained in documents which Mr. Churchill has printed. It is not borne out by the facts. In the Scarborough raid of 1914 it nearly resulted in ten British battle cruisers and battleships being caught by eighteen German vessels of similar type. At the Dogger Bank it exposed the British battle cruisers to risks which Mr. Churchill sets forth. At Jutland, it was one of the causes of the indecisive battle and the escape of the German fleet. What Mr. Churchill and Lord Fisher proposed to do was to press the construction of the necessary booms and defences at Rosyth in January, 1915, a work which Mr. Churchill says 'would have taken four or five months.' If we assume that it would have taken more than a year, the bulk of the fleet could have been at Rosyth by 1916, before Jutland. When Lord Jellicoe pronounced against the movement from Scapa to Rosyth, the works at Rosyth were not energetically pressed.

"As to the attitude of the Grand Fleet command in 1914-16 to the offensive, when Mr. Boothby produces documents (such as Mr. Churchill has given us) to support his contentions, then I shall be prepared to consider them, and, if they prove convincing, to modify my view. In regard to visual touch, no one has suggested that a battle cruiser fleet should at all times maintain visual touch with a battle fleet. But when it is known from wireless intercepts and other indications that a large enemy force is at sea and there are probabilities of a general engagement, then visual touch becomes of extreme importance. The absence of it at Jutland was another of the causes of the German escape.

"As to the suggestion that the war would not have been seriously influenced by the sinking of 'the bulk of the High Seas Fleet,' I cannot do better than point to Captain A. C. Dewar's conclusion in his account of the battle of Jutland ('Encyclopædia Britannica,' xxxi, 667): 'The immediate result of the failure of Jellicoe to strike a decisive blow was that the German High Seas Fleet remained intact, to be a bulwark to its submarines, and, by barring the Baltic, to hasten the disintegration of Russia.'"—ED. S.R.]

ENGLAND AND FRANCE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. North challenges history; when confuted he talks about "the Harmsworth hall-mark," and then says history does not matter, the real question is, Who will be responsible for the next war? I should answer, as far as one can see at present, that Germany will be mainly responsible, first by her fraudulent inflation to avoid a debt she bound herself to pay; second, in a much lesser degree, by her futile passive resistance. These also are the causes of whatever hardship there is in Germany to-day.

As regards the justification for being violently anti-French, the fact that one's forbears have been so is hardly a reason, but Mr. North is so fond of sweeping statements that I must not ask you to give me space to answer. It would be very interesting, however, to know what his feelings were in this matter during the war. If he is a patriot, as of course he is, they must have been sadly racked. I am not a hide-bound Gallophile by any means; I think the French Revolution the worst blot in history till the Russian one; and, to come up to date, that France behaved very badly as regards Angora, but that does not prevent me from seeing clearly that M. Poincaré is quite right to-day, and that all those who bark at his heels are very small people compared to him.

As to paragraph 3 of Mr. North's letter, I will only quote sayings of Bonar Law and Mr. Asquith: Bonar Law, that "if Germany were swallowed up by an earthquake, England would gain and not lose." Mr. Asquith, the other day, that "unemployment was quite as great in England twelve months ago, as now." This last has been pointed out over and over again, but is ignored, and the shout of "the Ruhr" repeated.

"Two million unemployed," says Mr. North; "1,250,000," says Mr. Asquith. This time last year it was 1,400,000.

So much for the Ruhr fiction. "Two years ago 'the sentiment was, never again, unless it's against France.'" Mr. North's "raillery," let us hope; or is this, and what follows in his letter, a splendid specimen of the schoolboy's faith, "the power of believing what one knows to be untrue"?

I, in turn, appeal to Mr. North to consider what harm the ventilation of violent and utterly unjust prejudice may do against this friendship, which is the keystone of European peace.

I am, etc.,

J. F. MURPHY

94 Piccadilly, W.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The venom exhaled by your correspondent, Mr. Nelson North, appears to be largely inspired by the tacit assumption that France's action is in some way or other responsible for unemployment. The mere enunciation of a proposition so absurd suffices to refute it. France's action in or out of the Ruhr has no more connexion with English unemployment or the economic situation in England generally than, say, the precession of the Equinoxes. M. Klotz, indeed, in some figures quoted by him the other day, showed that unemployment had continued to decline since the occupation of the Ruhr.

On the military side of the question possibly the return of the ex-Crown Prince to Germany as the figure-head of a monarchical reaction may create a wholesome diversion in your correspondent's mind from the problem of reparations to that of security. What, we should like to know, would he now say as to this latter problem if the French were *not* in occupation of the Ruhr? Facts of this ominous kind have an awkward habit of forcing themselves on our attention and of stamping-out the species of venomous prejudice flaunted by your correspondent. He is, indeed, one of those, unfortunately too numerous, people whom one would like to force to live for a few weeks or even possibly only for a few days, among the "most prosperous peasantry" in the devastated portion of N.E. France.

I am, etc.,

OLIVER E. BODINGTON

14 Avenue Pierre 1er de Serbie, Paris

FREE TRADE AND THE WORKERS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—It may be said of me, as Queen Elizabeth said of a certain foreign ambassador, that I "have read many and good books but have little knowledge of politics." I am, therefore, merely amused by the facility with which the manual labourers of this country are persuaded that the policy of Free Trade was designed to benefit the workers.

I suppose, Sir, there are few things more impressive than the pause which the Free Trade demagogue permits himself before propounding the query, "What did Mr. Cobden say in '45?" Nor is it possible to hear unmoved the approving roar which rises and swells as in vibrant tones the orator supplies the answer with the words, "Hands off the people's food!" Mr. Cobden certainly said this or something very like it. But he said other things as well. He said that if the price of food went up, he would be expected to give higher wages, which he was not prepared to do. He also said that he would never agree to the working hours being reduced from ten to eight, because it was in those last two hours that he made his profits. That it was also in those last two hours that his employees dug their early graves did not worry him. Nor was he concerned to think that his policy spelled the ruin of English agriculture and rendered probable the starvation of his countrymen in time of war. In fact, one need not be a student of politics to appreciate that Mr. Cobden's policy was intended to benefit Mr. Cobden, and was only practicable so long as England enjoyed a virtual monopoly of factory production and was at peace with a normal and prosperous world.

I have always in my mind likened Mr. Cobden to that patriarchal hypocrite, Mr. Casby, in 'Little Dorrit,' and were I a cartoonist I should illustrate the present political situation by depicting the stupendous scene in which Mr. Pancks, his better nature at last aroused, robbed of their lifelong illusions the racked tenants of Bleeding Heart Yard. And though no politician, I would venture to say that if the Conservative speakers perform their task as efficiently as Mr. Pancks performed his, a Conservative majority at the approaching election will be assured.

I am, etc.,

JOSEPH USHER

MR. ASQUITH ON PROTECTION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—*Re* Mr. Asquith's speech at Dewsbury. Accepting his figures with due reserve, even if only 140,000 workers were given direct employment through protecting manufactured goods, that alone is surely sufficient cause. Put their wages at £20,000,000 per annum. This would be spent in this country, giving further employment in the production of the commodities they would be able to purchase. The materials they would use, probably at least equalling their wages, would be largely produced in this country giving further employment and use of national resources. The workers helping to produce this raw material would thereby be given employment, and, spending their wages in this country, would give further employment in the production of the commodities they would buy.

The firms employing these 140,000 workers would put valuable plant and machinery into profitable use, involving the purchase of coal and other materials, thus giving further employment. These firms would give more employment to office and works staffs; transport and shipping would be used more, giving further employment. The firms would make profits and their shareholders be able to spend more in this country—again employment.

And so the waves arising from what Mr. Asquith apparently considers a paltry little pebble of employment for 140,000 men would spread and spread.

I am, etc.,

N. E. CHARLES

Southampton

PROTECTION—FOR CONSUMERS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—While I fully agree that certain trades must be protected in the national interest, I would ask what is going to be done to protect the consumer. I am unfortunately bound to use a single eye-glass. Before the war its replacement cost 1s. or even 6d. To-day it costs 7s. 6d. While I acknowledge that the manufacture of monocles is a key-industry—how else are our officers to be supplied with them in war-time?—I regard this rise in price as bare-faced robbery. Will Mr. Baldwin tell us how he proposes to prevent a similar ramp in every article he has in view to protect?

I am, etc.,

"CONSUMER"

Savage Club, Adelphi, W.C.

PRAYER-BOOK REVISION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—It seems to me that the innovators and counter-reformers who desire changes in the Prayer-Book—headed, I regret to see, by a large proportion of the Bishops—are singularly ignorant of, or indifferent to, the feelings of the ordinary quiet people who form the majority of our dwindling congregations. These, who are mainly of mature age, know their Prayer-Book well, and love every sentence and cadence of it. Now they are threatened with an uprooting, and it is a very serious question, indeed, how they will take it. The Bishop of Durham was perfectly right when he said, "It is a very noteworthy thing that there is no public demand for any revision at all." His remark was received with dissent, but it was quite true, and would have been true if put more strongly still. Many have been taken unawares by the carefully engineered movement, and are not yet fully aroused; but I hear on all sides expressions of dismay at the prospect of change and upsetting. With the doctrinal aspects of the matter I am not competent to deal; but I assert roundly that from the literary point of view the proposed changes are, one and all, outrageous. Not one living

Englishman has yet appeared, capable of composing a single clause fit to stand beside the Collects, prayers and exhortations as they are.

The advocates of change seem utterly blind to the dangers on which they are rushing. The present Prayer-Book is coherent, consistent, and suitable to all sorts and conditions of men, except the recklessly opinionated. Where its language is archaic, it is none the worse suited to the rural population, among whom its older words are generally still current. The innovators would be better employed in trying to comprehend its beauty than in devising changes.

This attempt to undermine the Reformation and to transmogrify an incomparable Liturgy will bring dire mischief upon its authors, and endanger the Church of England. No Church can subsist without congregations, and the proposed changes will bring down our congregations, already thinned, to vanishing point. They will not retain a single waverer; still less will they bring in one solitary recruit. But they will sadly distress and unsettle those who, greatly harassed of late by events in the outer world, have continued to cling to the peace and comfort of the services of the Church, and, up to the present, form the faithful staple of its worshippers.

I am, etc.,

RICHARD R. OTTLEY

1 Park Street, Bath

"RATIONAL ECONOMICS"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I am grateful—what author could be otherwise?—for the generous and discerning review of my new book, 'Economics and Ethics,' published in your issue of November 10. In justice, however, to my old friend and former pupil, Mr. P. E. Roberts, I am constrained to point out that your reviewer is in error in suggesting that the book—whatever its merits or faults—owes anything to his "help," or that he has any responsibility for a line of it. He was kind enough to read a portion of the proofs, and may perhaps have corrected some typographical errors, though the printers and readers of the Clarendon Press leave little room for such corrections. There his responsibility began and ended. Even of proof-reading the chief burden rested on Mr. L. L. Price. Both Mr. Price's and Mr. Roberts's services, in this regard, are gratefully acknowledged in the Preface.

I am, etc.,

J. A. R. MARRIOTT

Carlton Club, S.W.

NATIONAL MENUS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Is not Mr. Edward H. Robins carrying his business as a professional comedian a little too far when he suggests that the Cecil contains London's last cook capable of preparing a typical British dinner? Unfortunately I have been exiled in London long enough to digest the typical English dinner, and so I can go further even than Mr. Robins. I say that no dinner is typically British unless it contains—no, not haggis, because only a Highlander has enough sense of humour to appreciate that—kail, salmon, Scotch neck of mutton or grouse; and that no Sassenach chef can turn one out as well as our "wee bunches of souroch."

I am, etc.,

L. MCGAVIN

26 Granville Gardens, W.12

Reviews

THE SCIENCE OF MAN

What is Man? By J. Arthur Thomson. Methuen. 6s. 6d. net.

AT the beginning of modern philosophy, three hundred years ago, Descartes wrote a short treatise entitled '*L'Homme*.' He thought his discovery that movement is necessarily a vortex enabled him to interpret on an absolutely simple principle the whole mechanism of the living body.

Let us suppose [he says] that bodies are no other than clay statues or machines which God has fashioned to resemble us as much as possible, both by giving them externally the colour and shape of our members, and internally the parts which are necessary for their working, so that they eat and breathe and in fact perform all the functions which we imagine proceed from the nature of matter and from the disposition of the organs.

He then shows how the whole mechanism could be made to work, without any need for the presence of the thinking soul. Extension and movement would account for everything.

Since Descartes's day our physical science has grown enormously, both extensively and intensively, and yet of the science of man how little is objective, how much the greater part is speculation and pure conjecture! We have indeed dropped the theological setting and we have changed the fundamental conception from movement to energy, but are we, so far as knowledge is concerned, greatly advanced?

When we read Professor Thomson's construction of man's evolutionary history and his interpretation of the nature of man's various activities, what strikes us most forcibly is the poverty of the actual facts and the purely conjectural nature of the knowledge. Man's evolution, the circumstances of his first appearing, his establishment and successful lordship, are matters on which we would like to have knowledge and we feel that it ought to be within our attainment, if for no other reason because we ourselves are men, and yet the actual discoveries are fragmentary, scattered and few. It is true that they are recent and that they are accumulating. Almost daily we receive news of discoveries, but when we think of the vast periods of evolutionary history of which we have to reconstruct, the facts seem strangely slender and disproportionate to the generalizations they have to support. We have a skull-cap, three teeth and a thigh bone from Java, and from these we have reconstructed *Pithecanthropus erectus*; a lower jaw-bone found at Heidelberg, and from this we have reconstructed *Palaeanthropus heidelbergensis*; the greater part of a skull from the Piltdown gravels in Sussex, and from this we have reconstructed *Eoanthropus Dawsoni*; also we have a good many burial remains of *Homo neanderthalensis*. These are all the actual fossils we have found of the races of *Hominidae* which preceded the emergence of *Homo sapiens*. They have enabled us to sketch in very speculative and in very meagre outline, a kind of evolutionary history embracing geological epochs—the rest is conjecture.

Professor Thomson has a delightfully clear way of describing these discoveries and discussing the reconstructions based on them. He can communicate to us some of the excitement of discovery. Yet it must be admitted that a large part of his book is drearily dull. It is not entirely his fault. When he has no facts, and yet wishes to fill in the gaps in our knowledge, his method is to infer what must have been from what is. Everyone has laughed at the clergyman's method of dividing the sermon into heads and explaining carefully under one, two, three and four what the thing is not, before he comes, fifthly and lastly, to what it is. The scientific man can fall into the same vice. For example, we possess not the faintest fragment of fact to show us how, when and where man first learned to produce fire and

control it, but since it must have happened somewhere and somehow, we pretend we can get at it by cataloguing all the things man could do and could not do before and after he produced the fire. Professor Thomson's book was originally spoken lectures, and a good deal which will pass when spoken is wearisome when it has to be read.

Man's evolution is only a part of Professor Thomson's theme. He deals with the nature of man under all its aspects. His favourite plan, however, is from the nature of the activities to guess at their evolutionary or historical origin. There are interesting discussions of social problems. Genetics, population, birth-control, war and peace, disease and senility, are all discussed in their scientific bearing as affecting our destiny. The final chapter is a question, 'What is man not?' It is offered as an answer to the question of the title, 'What is Man?'

We close the book with the reflection that an exhaustive survey of modern discoveries concerning man, his origin and his nature, shows that with all the vast increase in knowledge, direct and indirect, we are not brought nearer to the object of our search, rather it recedes from us wrapped in ever deeper mystery.

THE AUTHOR OF 'IONICA'

Ionicus. By Reginald, Viscount Esher. Murray. 15s. net.

SCHOOLMASTERS who are not headmasters have little fame; yet their patient teaching and scholarship have stood for much in the training of famous men and the encouragement of dullards. Their range of thought is often restricted; they go on teaching the same things; and the pupils they have fitted for success go out of their lives and forget them. This is partly their own fault, for they have not the wisdom of Nietzsche, who saw that the master must be outgrown, even despised and contradicted by his former pupils. Viscount Esher blames himself now and again in this book for neglecting his old master, but the store of letters it holds and the kind thought he showed in practical ways are clear proofs of lasting influence and affection. His "*Ionicus*," Cory, known to the outer world as the author of '*Ionica*,' was certainly dogmatic in his views, shy and reserved, at home in a few great houses only. His world was Eton, and the then exclusively Etonian King's. An accomplished classic, he never went in for the Tripos—such was the privilege of the royal college—but he won the Craven, and returned to Eton as a master, to enjoy and inspire youth with the fervour reflected in his verses. A Whig in sentiment, he took also a vivid interest in politics. He was in the running for the Cambridge Professorship of History when Kingsley was appointed, and would have been a learned expositor. These pages are full of notes about political history, of which, on the naval and military side, he knew a great deal.

His comments on such questions and on men of letters are fresh and often epigrammatic, touched with an idealism which might have been modified by more contact with life. He adored the British soldier, and thought barracks would make Oxford more attractive. Viscount Esher has wisely reproduced a fine poem on him by Sir Henry Newbolt as a guide to his character; but we wonder that he has not also referred to the brilliant study of him by his pupil Herbert Paul in '*Stray Leaves*.' Reading this, one gets a clue to his oddities. He could not abide Thackeray, though he loved Scott. He paid a just tribute to the greatness of '*Middlemarch*,' and was tepid about Jane Austen. He derided both Beaconsfield and Gladstone, and was a shrewd judge of coming men, such as his piquant pupil Lord Rosebery. He objected to the long survival of Palmerston:

It is a dreadful mistake the world makes to ascribe a measure of infallibility to old men who are too old and dignified to be contradicted, and whose life has ceased to be examinable, as Plato would say.

Another dreadful thing was "to be a reviewer and either to ruin Grub Streeters by speaking plainly of their failures, or cheat the patron-purchasers of books by exaggerated praise." He has a wise word about the "sympathizing appreciating twaddlers" on feminine genius, who boast "a sort of lady's maid monopoly of insight into the back hair." He thought no Papist a good poet, and had not, we suppose, come across Crashaw, whose "not impossible She" is like his own '*Amaturus*' in '*Ionica*.' He wanted a composer for the story of Dido, and forgot or ignored Purcell. There were gaps in his wide knowledge; but altogether, he was, we should say, a charming man, when he allowed himself to be known, and worthy of this handsome record. The picture of him by his nephew Charles Furse, reproduced in the frontispiece, is shadowy, but delightful.

BOOKS FOR BOYS

SURELY there could be no better gift for a boy who is fond of "doing things" than the excellent series of *Handicraft Books for Scouts* (Milford, 6d. net each). These well-printed little paper-covered volumes are of a convenient size for putting in a reasonable pocket, and should make delightful companions till they are thumbed to bits. *The Scout's Desert Island Book*, by Herbert McKay, describes all that can be done on a piece of waste land by two or three imaginative and handy boys, who wish to make a cave and spend their spare (but not idle) time in it. *Shacks and Shelters*, by Mark Harborough, shows how all kinds of primitive dwellings can be erected with simple tools. *Seamanship*, by Lawrence R. Bourne, tells as much as can be learnt from such a book. *The Scout's Book of Observation*, by Herbert McKay, deals with domestic mysteries of cisterns and electric bells, joists and windows. *The Scout's Book of Trees*, by A. D. Merriam, and *A Nature Log-Book*, by Marcus Woodward, train the eye for country life.

The Swan and her Crew, by G. Christopher Davies (Jarrolds, 5s. net), describes the adventures of three young naturalists and sportsmen on the Broads and rivers of Norfolk. Under the thin guise of a story it depicts the varied forms of animal life that are to be found in this fascinating district, which Mr. Davies knows intimately and of which he writes with zealous affection. Any boy with a taste for natural history will learn much from its pages as to the ways of the wild in our own country. Numerous graphic illustrations will assist the reader to recognize the various birds, beasts, and fish that animate the district of the Broads.

The War of the Wireless Waves, by Percy F. Westerman (Milford, 6s. net), is a thrilling tale of a future war, in which a scientific despot endeavours to conquer the world by an application of his latest discovery. This is a mysterious ray which is able to paralyze all forms of electrical activity in the areas to which it is applied. It is easy to see that such a ray would give its proprietor the power of starving out all civilized countries, in which at the time of this story almost everything is done by electricity. The theme of the book is the effort of the British Navy to remove this menace from civilization, and it is needless to add that it ultimately succeeds.

Clipped Wings, by Percy F. Westerman (Blackie, 6s. net), is based on a similar but less comprehensive idea. The hero of this book is the nephew of an inventor who has devised a ray that is capable of putting aeroplane engines out of action. As war is entirely in the power of aircraft at the time of the story, a small but enterprising South American Republic sees its chance, by capturing the inventor, his secret and his nephew, to make itself supreme in the world. There are some thrilling episodes, but the boy's nerve and resourcefulness succeed in bringing the avuncular affairs to a fortunate ending.

Adrift in the South Seas, by George S. Surrey (Milford, 6s. net), deals with a district that has not yet be-

come hackneyed by novelists. The two boys who are the joint heroes of the tale go to sea with a short-handed pearl-fisher from Thursday Island, and after some sufficiently exciting adventures are captured by a set of Japanese pirates, who maroon them on the Great Barrier Reef. Thence they are rescued by black fellows and carried off to a life of nomadic captivity in the little-known interior of the Australian continent. It is all very readable and full of thrilling ups and downs.

The Jungle Trail, by Peter Blundell (Milford, 6s. net), also deals with a little-known district, which seems, however, to be sufficiently familiar to the author. It describes a journey by two European adventurers into the wilds of Borneo, in search of a valuable document that had gone amissing in an odd way. Jungle travel is well described, and the great scene is when the adventurers are captured by head-hunting Dyaks and set to fight with a fierce and blood-thirsty orang-outang—the local executioner. A pleasing variation on the theme of Androcles and the lion restores them to civilization, and teaches us that a good deed is never lost.

The Luck of Colin Charteris, by Arthur O. Cooke (Blackie, 6s. net), is an exciting tale of Mexico. It opens with the experiences of an agreeable lad of seventeen, who takes up a career on a Mexican ranch. The free and joyous aspect of workaday life among the cattle is pleasantly described. But the real thrills begin when Colin falls into the hands of one of the rebel armies, and is held as a valuable hostage by "the Tiger of the North," otherwise known to fame as General Villa. This romantic escape and discovery of wealth conclude a very entertaining yarn.

The Channel Pirate, by Lawrence R. Bourne (Milford, 6s. net), is a narrative of the old smuggling days. Two boys are carried off by a notorious smuggler, who turned out, like Dirk Hatteraick, not to be above dabbling in piracy on occasion. Mr. Bourne's seamanship is above reproach. Rakish schooners and long nines, Revenue cutters and iron carronades, combine to make this a breezy and exhilarating tale.

Comrades of the Nile, by John Finbarr (Milford, 6s. net), has a timely interest in view of the popular expectations as to the treasures which are still to be obtained from the tomb of Tutankhamen. Some of the most thrilling episodes take place in the sepulchre of "the mummy that laughs"—a cheerful imagination. The laugh in question is sufficiently terrifying—"just a horrible 'Haw-haw-haw!' and then it ran up into a screech—an awful blood-curdling screech." No, it was not a hyena, as the imagination of the practised novel-reader may suggest; it was something far less comfortable. There are also some good fights with the Mahdi's fanatical followers.

The Three Skippers, by Robert Overton (Jarrolds, 3s. 6d. net), describes the exciting maiden voyage of a sailing "tramp" under three commanders, one of whom was an impostor and another a mere boy. It is full of thrills, and illustrates the various ways in which a ship on her lawful occasions may be made to serve the ends of crime. The notion of taking invalid passengers on the terms of a hundred guineas for those who returned and a thousand for those who were buried at sea is quite a good one—especially under a captain who was a qualified medical man with a full knowledge of poisons.

Sea-Scout and Savage, by Robert Leighton (Ward, Lock, 4s. 6d. net), is the tale of a boy's adventures among the cannibal savages of the Solomon Islands. There is a good deal of lively fighting in the book, though much of it was done with squibs and rockets rather than with lethal weapons—but the latter had also sometimes to be used. The self-sacrifice of the "noble savage" who shares the honours of the title with Chris Wingrove ends the book on a note of pathos which will appeal, no doubt, to its youthful readers.

The Boy Skipper, by William C. Metcalf (Jarrolds, 2s. 6d. net), is chiefly remarkable for its minute description of life on board an old-fashioned "wind-jammer."

It is evidently written by someone who is well acquainted with the daily routine of such a vessel. The plain tale of the stirring, but not impossible, events by which it fell to the lot of a young apprentice to take charge of the ship and navigate her through perils by mutiny as well as by storm, should appeal to all boys who had the seafaring instinct in their blood.

The Bravest Boy in the Camp, by Robert Leighton (Jarrolds, 2s. 6d. net), is a story of adventure on the Western prairies. There is a good deal of Indian fighting, with yelling savages, fiery mustangs, Winchester rifles and hairbreadth rescues. There are also coyotes and rattlesnakes. What more is required to make a lively story? If more is required, there is also a tangled tale of confused parentage and a thrilling scene of recognition at the end.

Second Innings, by Hylton Cleaver (Milford, 6s. net), is based upon an idea which strikes us as decidedly original among school stories. The hero has been forced to leave school early in consequence of the financial misfortunes of his family, goes into an insurance office, and unexpectedly inherits a large sum of money. After a brief and unsatisfactory trial of life about town as a gentleman at large, he very sensibly decides to go back to school again. It is this "second innings" which Mr. Cleaver illustrates with his well-known light-hearted humour, and the account of life at the new public school is very brightly touched. Mr. H. M. Brock's delightful illustrations quite enter into the spirit of a lark and amusing book.

The Last Lap, by Walter Rhoades (Milford, 6s. net), is a good story of school life, dealing with the way in which the hero came to be captain of his school. There is some excellent cricket, a little football, plenty of bullying and its punishment. It is briefly written and shows considerable knowledge of schoolboy character.

The Life of the School, by H. A. R. Goodyear (Jarrolds, 2s. 6d. net), is a lively harum-scarum sort of tale. The chief incidents centre in the preparations for a pageant, which should appeal to boys with a taste for amateur scene-painting and "dressing-up."

BOOKS FOR GIRLS

KITTY'S CHINESE GARDEN, by Joan Leslie (Milford, 6s. net), describes the simple but picturesque experiences of a girl of sixteen who goes out from school in England to keep house for her father in Pekin. Her great ambition was to get into a real willow-plate garden, "real willow, real bridge, real water, and a real little house with one, two, three twisty roofs on top." The great scene in the book describes the fulfilment of this ambition. It was a most fascinating garden, and all girls will envy Kitty Clavering when they read how it became her very own.

Our Jungle Home, by Alice F. Jackson (Blackie, 3s. 6d. net), has also an exotic setting. It is the simple story of seven little "jungly-wallas," the children of an English civil engineer whose home was in the heart of the Panjim Jungle in India. The common events of jungle life are well described.

The Children of Sunshine Mine, by Margaret Batchelor (Milford, 6s. net), relates the history of a family of children whose father was manager of a mine in Rhodesia. They are quite amusing children, and their vendetta with the mine official whom they unjustly suspected of having killed their Persian cat for the pleasure of stuffing it provides some lively episodes. The background of Kaffirs and baboons, kopje and karoo, is well sketched.

The Palace in the Garden and The Story of a Spring Morning, by Mrs. Molesworth (Chambers, 3s. 6d. net each), deal with the simple adventures of various children, who are handled with the light and sure touch characteristic of their author. The "palace in the garden" is a fascinating little house, in the country, where a London family were packed off to spend a summer by themselves, and the young reader will agree with the young heroine that "Rosebuds"

(as the house was called) was one of the few nice things "that have turned out as nice as I expected them." The "spring morning" is an episode in the life of a young family, which palpitates with mild excitement.

Two Little Wanderers, by Mrs. Hobart-Hampden (Milford, 3s. net), is the story of two little Indian children, who lived on the verge of a mysterious forest and, like Kim, embarked on a quest for the sacred river of healing. Their adventures with men and beasts are well described, and the author has drawn a pretty picture of the kindness which almost all the natives of India feel for children.

Climbing the Hill, by Annie S. Swan (Blackie, 2s. net), contains three stories in this veteran author's mildest manner. One deals with the struggle of a worthy little boy to find work and support his mother, the other two with the simple adventures of children during their country holidays.

A Girl and a Caravan, by Bessie Marchant (Blackie, 3s. 6d. net), is the interesting story of an English girl who was the adopted daughter of a Persian merchant, and used to help him most efficiently in managing the big caravans of pack-mules with which he travelled up and down that fascinating country. Alert and vigorous, she had been brought up in ignorance of her real parentage, and the tale of the adventures through which she passed in seeking her real affinities is quite thrilling.

The Luck of the Eardleys, by Sheila E. Braine (Blackie, 3s. 6d. net), is, in the main, the tale of a treasure-hunt carried to a successful issue by a family of delightful children, among whom we like a young author who fills in the dull intervals by writing fairytales, one of which forms an agreeable interlude. It is no surprise to learn that in later life Ellaline became a successful author.

Ann's Great Adventure, by E. L. Cowper (Blackie, 6s. net), breaks novel ground, since the "adventure" in question took place on a small yacht, of which Ann became a large part of the crew. Mrs. Cowper seems to understand life on a ten-tonner, and the sea part of her narrative is full of breeziness. Ann's surprised annoyance at finding that she had not merely to look pretty on deck, but to make beds and wash up the breakfast things, is amusingly described. The effect of the cruise on Ann will make many young readers anxious to test for themselves the truth of her conviction that sailing is "the most glorious, splendid, wonderful thing ever invented."

The Ferry House Girls, by Bessie Marchant (Blackie, 3s. 6d. net), is a lively story of girls' lives in the Australian bush. There is plenty of riding, swimming, boating, and open-air life. A gang of bush-rangers and a hunt for missing papers provide plenty of excitement.

A School Girl of the Blue, by May Baldwin (Chambers, 5s. net), has nothing to do with school in the ordinary sense of the word. The young heroine is taken out to British East Africa by her father, who has obtained a soldier-settler's farm there, and the book describes her adventures in the daily life of that interesting country, and the educative effect they have upon her. It is brightly written and describes all the objects of local interest, from Kikuyus to rhinoceroses.

The Strawberry Girls, by Helen M. Duffus, and *Polly of Lady Gay Cottage*, by Emma C. Dowd (Blackie, 2s. 6d. net each), are both pleasant and uneventful stories of American girls' lives, well-written and interesting in the slightly different angle at which they view life. Polly is a sweet little thing, and the girls who run the strawberry farm are an engaging crowd.

The Coming of Carlina, by L. E. Tiddeman (Blackie, 2s. 6d. net), is the story of a little English girl brought up in Italy, and her trials and troubles when she was suddenly transplanted to cold and unemotional England. Only at the end is "the little

flower from the south beginning to take root in English soil." It is a human and touching story.

Schoolgirl Kitty, by Angela Brazil (Blackie, 6s. net), begins at a girls' school, which Miss Brazil describes with her accustomed skill, but soon takes us away to a wider field. The most interesting part of the book describes the high-spirited Kitty's year in Paris—when her brother was studying art—and her holidays on the emerald coast of Brittany. Miss Brazil draws one of her most charming personalities in "little mother Kitty," and we part from her with regret.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND ANNUALS

QUITE the best of the Christmas books for children this year, to our taste, is *Number One, Joy Street* (Blackwell, 6s. net), a fascinating medley of prose and verse by such well-known writers as Walter de la Mare, Rose Fyleman, Laurence Housman, Eleanor Farjeon, and others, who know how to tune their merry note to the quintessential taste of childhood. The woodcuts and coloured illustrations, with excellent, clear printing, make this an ideal book of its kind. The same publisher sends us two delightful little books of verse for children, *Boggarty Ballads*, by Madeleine Nightingale (2s. 6d. net), and *Dormer Windows*, by Anne Macdonald (3s. 6d. net).

The Oxford Books for Children (Milford) are simple, well-written and well-printed stories, including *Potter's Haven*, by Violet Bradby (3s. net)—a pretty, unsophisticated tale of such a Cornish holiday as any family of children might like to have—and *The Isle of Wirrawoo*, by A. L. Purse, *A Merry Heart*, by Joan Leslie, *The Bringing-up of Mary Ann*, by Alice Massie, *Our Lil*, by Agnes Adams, and *A Summer at the Barn*, by Mrs. A. G. Latham (1s. net each). The same publisher issues in *The Children's Hour Series* (2s. net each) three large type books for small readers, *Gilbert the Page*, by Elizabeth Kyle, *Frida of Long Dyke Farm*, by Margaret S. Lane, and *In the Days of the Pharaohs*, by Thora Stowell: also, *The Joyous Book* (3s. 6d. net) with pleasant verses by Mildred Sowerby and pretty coloured pictures of children and fairies by Natalie Joan, and *The Peek-a-Boo Gipsies*, a charming picture-book, quaintly designed by Chloe Preston and gracefully told by May Byron. Happy the nursery that has any or all of these!

Messrs. Blackie issue a large number of picture-books for small children, with coloured pictures—often very pretty and often funny—and large appropriate letterpress, including *Robin Redbreast Story Book* (1s. 9d. net), *The Lucky Story Book* (2s. 6d. net), *The Leafy Woods Book* (1s. 6d. net), *The Bluebell Story Book* (1s. net), *Robinson Crusoe* (2s. net), retold for little folks, with a perfectly gorgeous picture of the raft, *On the Railway* (2s. net), with fine coloured pictures of engines, *Jack and Jill* (2s. net), *The Three Little Pigs* (3s. 6d. net), jovially illustrated by Frank Adams, *Tales and Pictures and Rhymes to Read* (3s. 6d. net), with a fascinating coloured plate of a canal barge at a lock, and *An Alphabet Painting Book* (2s. net), by E. J. Thorley, with hints for little painters.

Messrs. Dean, those old friends and favourites of the nursery, issue a *Youngsters' Budget* and *Jolly Youngsters' Book* (3s. net each)—why this invidious discrimination?—of large-type stories and verses, old and new, with good clear pictures; as well as various books for painting and stencil books at prices varying from 6d. to 2s., which everyone knows will provide a fund of quiet amusement.

Mr. Kipling's *How the Alphabet was Made* (Hodder and Stoughton, 2s. 6d. net) has been converted very appropriately into a painting book for the Taffies of to-day.

Uncle's Animal Book, by G. E. Studdy (Warne), contains good pictures of elephants, lions, and other animals, with amusing doggerel verses.

Quite Wild Animals, by Beatrice Curtis Brown, never grew on sea or land, but we are glad to meet them—especially the Pufftuffin, who is very like a well-known public man. This is published by Heinemann (3s. 6d. net).

The Black Cats and the Tinker's Wife, by Margaret Baker (Grant Richards, 2s. 6d. net), is chiefly remarkable for the feline silhouettes with which it is adorned by Miss Mary Baker.

Susan, by Amy Walton (Blackie, 2s. 6d. net), and *Little Lucia*, by Mabel L. Robinson (Dent, 3s. 6d. net), are pleasant stories for and about children.

A great and commendable crop of annuals for various ages and tastes comes from Mr. Milford. Those well-known caterers for children, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Strang, are responsible for most of them, including *Herbert Strang's Annual for Boys* (5s. net), *Mrs. Strang's Annual for Girls* (5s. net), *Mrs. Strang's Annual for Children* (5s. net), *The Tiny Folk's Annual* (3s. 6d. net), *Mrs. Strang's Annual for Baby* (3s. 6d. net). The same editors are responsible for four *Big Books*, respectively for boys, girls, children and babies, which are marvellous value at half-a-crown. All these volumes are copiously illustrated, and made up of good stories, narratives of adventure, practical articles on making things, and verses. Very similar is *The Oxford Annual for Scouts* (3s. 6d. net), now in its fifth year and likely to grow in popularity with that worthy organization.

Messrs. Blackie send us their *Girls' Annual* (5s. net), *Children's Annual* (5s. net), and *Little Ones' Annual* (3s. 6d. net), excellent compendiums of stories and articles, verse and pictures.

Messrs. Ward, Lock send us the nineteenth issue of their well-known *Wonder Book* (6s. net), a picture annual for boys and girls; *The Wonder Book of Nature* (6s. net), by Harry Golding, with numerous excellent photographs of birds and beasts, insects and plants and natural scenes; and *My Picture Book of Railways* (1s. 6d. net), with copious illustrations and simple descriptions of engines and railway apparatus.

FAIRY TALES AND FANTASIES

THERE is a good crop this Christmas of fairy tales and fantasies, both old and new, which will appeal to children of every age from seven to seventy. Among the very best we reckon *Tales from Timbuktu*, by Constance Smedley (Chatto and Windus, 7s. 6d. net), in which a number of African and Asiatic fairy-tales are retold and placed in an appropriate setting. Fascinating pictures by Mr. Armfield add, if possible, to the lingering charm of Mrs. Armfield's stories.

Mr. Laurence Housman has the secret of romantic story-telling, and both young and old will welcome the reprint of some of his older work under the title of *All Fellows and the Cloak of Friendship* (Cape, 6s. net). Perhaps one must be grown up to appreciate the haunting melody of Mr. Housman's simple prose, but we know by experience that children love his happily conceived fantasies.

No one is more closely in touch with the fairies than Miss Rose Fyleman, who seems to have the art of "listening in" to their "still" surviving communications. In *Forty Good-Night Stories* (Methuen, 3s. 6d. net) she charms and amuses us as usual. But it will be a very stolid child that will be content to have only one of them each bed-time.

Miss Netta Syrett is also an old and valued friend of childhood, and the true inspiration of Pan breathes through the five stories which she tells in *Tinkelly Winkle* (Bodley Head, 6s. net). A number of delightful coloured pictures of children and fairies, by Marcia Lane Foster, add to the attraction of this pleasing volume.

Topsy-Turvy Tales, by Elsie Smeaton Munro (Bodley Head, 7s. 6d. net), have the true spirit of the elfin world in their narratives of the intercourse between

modern children and old-world fairies. Mr. Heath Robinson's ingenious fancy and clean drawing have seldom been better displayed than in his illustrations to these charming stories.

Tales of Elfin Town, by Myrrha Bantock (Dent, 3s. 6d. net), is chiefly remarkable for the author's quaint and grotesque coloured illustrations, which are just what every child would like to draw, but only a very skilful and imaginative artist could produce. We have seldom seen more convincing goblins.

The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle, by Hugh Lofting (Cape, 7s. 6d. net), is a sequel to the story of Dr. Dolittle, which, in a preface to this volume, Mr. Hugh Walpole describes as "the first real children's classic since 'Alice.'" It is an amusing rhapsody of adventures by sea in a ship manned largely by talking birds and animals, and is quaintly written and illustrated. Polynesia, the Parrot, is a most engaging creature, and many children who already know her will wish to listen to more of her conversation.

The Pinafore Pocket Story Book, by Miriam Clark Potter (Dent, 6s. net), is a selection from simple stories and rhymes, which were "carried as a daily juvenile feature" for two years by the *New York Evening Post*. Mrs. Potter has a good idea of the way to amuse children in "those precious little whiles before bed-time," and her stories should appeal to English children as much as they have already done to Americans. There are excellent black-and-white pictures of babies and other animals by Sophia T. Balcom.

The old stories still have the most enduring charm, and no nursery can be complete without Mrs. Craik's well-known *Fairy Book* (Nelson, 6s. net), of which we welcome a new edition in large clear type with many coloured illustrations. There is no better authority for the history of the 'Sleeping Beauty,' 'Little Red Riding Hood,' 'Puss in Boots,' and the other old favourites.

The Greek mythology is laid under contribution in *Once Upon a Time*, by Blanche Winder (Ward, Lock, 6s. net), in which some two dozen of the most famous Greek tales are retold for children in simple and clear language. There are forty-eight excellent coloured illustrations by Harry G. Theaker, well drawn and in good clean colours. With this we may recommend a new edition of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales* (Allen & Unwin, 4s. 6d. net), containing six of the best Greek stories, with spirited illustrations by George Soper.

Two excellent collections of Scandinavian fairy-tales are *The Norwegian Fairy Book* and *The Danish Fairy Book*, edited by Clara Stroebe, and excellently translated by Frederick H. Martens (Fisher Unwin, 7s. 6d. net each). The stories are very closely akin to those of Grimm, plus the "natural magic" in which the Scandinavian mind revels. They are "tales of elemental mountain, forest and sea spirits, handed down by hinds and huntsmen, wood-choppers and fisher-folk, men who led a hard and lonely life amid primitive surroundings." The atmosphere of the wood and the waste pervades them all. Mr. George W. Hood's coloured illustrations are thoroughly in keeping with the romantic spirit of these delightful tales.

Wonder Tales of the East, by Donald A. Mackenzie (Blackie, 5s. net), is a very readable selection of folk and fairy stories from recondite sources, as far apart as Egypt and Japan, New Zealand and Mesopotamia. They are well chosen and clearly told, with some decorative and haunting illustrations by Warwick Reynolds.

Camp Fire Yarns, by Margaret Stuart Lane (Milford, 3s. 6d. net) is a collection of old and new stories suitable for reading aloud to Girl Guides when camping out. Some are drawn from such old favourites as Malory and Hans Andersen, others deal with Girl Guides of to-day, but all are well adapted to the purpose of the book.

New Fiction

BY GERALD GOULD

Antic Hay. By Aldous Huxley. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d. net.*Reputation.* By Elinor Mordaunt. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d. net.*Peace in our Time.* By Oliver Onions. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d. net.*Told by an Idiot.* By Rose Macaulay. Collins. 7s. 6d. net.

MODERNITY! Is it a disease, or only a disease of the imagination? Is it a state peculiar to the twentieth century, or the perpetual and incurable state of all centuries? It is at any rate the favourite theme of twentieth-century authors.

Mr. Aldous Huxley thinks that beards and the seats of trousers are funny; and Miss Rose Macaulay thinks that forty years ago a large family could live in cultured ease and enjoy the most expensive sort of education on four hundred pounds a year; and Mr. Onions thinks that the typical ex-officer is a slack and irresponsible person; and Mrs. Mordaunt does not always "join her flats." In brief, it is easy to pick holes in all these books. And yet they are all four good, and two of them excitingly so.

Gumbriel's Patent Small Clothes, a sort of trouser which enables the leanest to sit with comfort on the hardest seat: such is the basis of Mr. Huxley's fantasy. It is, if the inept metaphor may pass, his standing joke. He returns to it at intervals, with the gusto of Artemus Ward's tiger, who was seen "with a large and well selected assortment of seats of trowsis in his mouth." Why the sedentary position should be considered comic is a mystery. It is the position of judges and other awful and intimidating figures. What, according to the poet, did "the haughty and the strong" do in "the high places"? They sat in them. There is no Professor without his Chair. The life sedentary is the life thoughtful and debonair. But Mr. Huxley will have his little joke, and it must be one that, however inexplicably, every schoolboy shares. Presumably that is why he is still playing "Beaver," a game which for the rest of the world ceased to be amusing some twelve months ago. That is why he thinks it worth while to print blasphemous rhymes which the crudest undergraduate would scarcely repeat in a tipsy conversation. That is why he presents us with a young lady whose eyes to the idealist look "plumbless with thought" when she is actually thinking: "If I wait till the summer sale, the crêpe de Chine will be reduced by at least two shillings a yard." The fact is that the cheap, the obvious, the popular, has a fatal fascination for Mr. Huxley. It is his Dark Angel, struggling with the Muse for possession of what is, when all's said on the other side, one of the rarest and most promising intelligences of our time. There are passages in 'Antic Hay' of a pure and rhythmic beauty: passages so fine, so just, that they move one like good music. Casimir Lypiatt, the would-be genius, trying to drown the still small voice of self-knowledge in the violence of self-praise: Emily, the gentle lover—Mr. Huxley has drawn, in these, pictures of a really exquisite truth. He has tragic moments. His general reflections, when they are serious, are profound. His best descriptive passages are too long to quote; and if I praise them as I think they deserve to be praised, but without quotation, I can scarcely hope to be believed. Their beauty and wisdom are such as to make moderate laudation seem skimpy and grotesque. They are real: they flow and sing: they could not be other than they are. And then—plump!—on the next page we are back again in a painful unreality: in a dirty, trivial world of the constant effort—and failure—to be clever; of aimless, pointless, seductions at sight. There may exist such worlds, but they certainly do not exist in the light in which Mr. Huxley portrays them.

His title he explains by a quotation from Marlowe:

My men like satyrs grazing on the lawns
Shall with their goat-feet dance the antic hay.

"Satyrs" in the modern sense most of his men are, but the reference is inappropriate all the same. For the real satyrs were at least lusty and vigorous, whereas Mr. Huxley is preoccupied with creatures decadently squirming and fainting. Perhaps he agrees with the king in 'Alice'—"There's nothing like hay when you're faint."

I do not know that there is much to choose between Mr. Onions's world and Mr. Huxley's. Mr. Onions assures us that he is giving us the result of direct observation; but observations vary with the observers. He has, anyhow, achieved a powerful tract; he has put an awkward but necessary question to the national conscience; he has shown how dangerous and deleterious it is for young men who have deserved well of their country to find themselves workless and moneyless, unable to afford the normal life of marriage and home. His testimony must be taken as in favour of the view that to-day's problem is unique, its modernity in a special sense modern.

Not so Mrs. Mordaunt or Miss Macaulay. By a coincidence, they have published simultaneously works in which the recurring cry is, in effect, that there's nothing new under the sun. Both of them quote Victorian writers as deploring the lack of reverence, the emancipation, the modernity, of young women. Both of them imply that, the more it changes, the more it is the same thing, this disturbing young womanhood. Yesterday, bicycles and bloomers: to-day, side-cars, latchkeys and cigarettes: to-morrow, perhaps, trousers, spats and pipes: and always love-affairs. What would you, after all? But Mrs. Mordaunt, though she has produced a spirited and charming story (much the best that she has published in the last few years) has scarcely made her plot illustrate her theory. Clergymen's daughters ran away with married peers in Victoria's day, perhaps, and perhaps do so still; but nowadays they are, at any rate, aware that they are taking a noticeable step, a step which will call for comment in papa's parish.

As for Miss Macaulay, she has surpassed herself. She is always—well, almost always—witty; but in 'Told by an Idiot' she fairly blazes with wit. There are, actually, enough good jokes in her first four pages to furnish a whole novel; and if she does not quite keep up that pitch, it is because nobody could. She has chosen a form which gives admirable scope to her kind of wit. She takes a whole family, parents, children, grandchildren, through roughly half a century, touching off in each decade the absurdities and illusions which at each point have passed for wisdom, and insisting, in a refrain which gains by every repetition, that those absurdities and illusions belong to this year or that because they belong to all years—to the human heart itself. This panoramic method precludes the fond detailing of daily life; it calls for vivid pictures, and it gets them. All the same, Miss Macaulay gropes marvellously deep into her characters, especially Rome and Imogen; she has, as it were, packed twenty novels into one. Her one fault in art (save for the four hundred a year "bloomer") is that she has found room for a few irrelevancies. She actually takes half a page to explain that "pagan" doesn't mean "irreligious."

A certain hopelessness of outlook is indicated in the title and implied in the most poignant of the scenes. Destructive criticism of life can be raised to a power at which it becomes constructive (compare the shattering but inspiring greatness of 'Candide'); but that is not Miss Macaulay's way. Her bitterness is never savage, and therefore never really hopeless. She has a soft spot for most of the follies she rebukes. Remembering her own main contention, that human folly is universal and eternal, she feels with, and for, its practitioners. She is not afraid of tenderness. She gives, profusely, beauty as well as wit.

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Round the Library Table

A MISCELLANY

THERE is, I understand, a great market in the United States for what are known as pre-digested foodstuffs, which can be consumed without making any demands on the recipient's powers of digestion. They have, no doubt, a use; what is certain is that they have many analogies in modern book-production. Every year a large number of books are published with the avowed intention of making no demand on the reader's mental powers, but of giving him the results of the world's greatest thought or achievement. Their value is a minimum. Here and there a reader may find a useful summary, if he is fortunate enough to come upon an accurate book-maker, but he can learn nothing in any true sense. Mr. Henry Osborn Taylor is one of the most successful in the pre-digesting craft; he has in 'Ancient Ideals' reduced classical thought to pap; in the 'Mediaeval Mind' presented the immense literature of the Middle Ages as an orderly sequence of thought by judicious quotation, and has done something similar to the Sixteenth Century. Anyone who knows enough to use these books with discretion is glad to have them as reference books—regarded as original contributions they are admirably suited for addresses to Young Men's Mutual Improvement Societies.

* * *

Mr. Taylor has now issued 'Freedom of the Mind in History' (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. net), originally conceived as a course of lectures, and since elaborated. It is for the first two-thirds mainly pompous talk about the subjects of the three books already mentioned, for the last third an attempt to explain the modern mechanics of Poincaré, Whitehead, and Einstein, while "the moving will of God is assumed to comprehend and guide the whole." Another book, which is certainly not pap but more nearly pemmican, is by Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan on 'Atoms and Electrons' (Hodder and Stoughton, 2s. 6d. net). It demands, on the part of its reader, a certain minimum of knowledge of science, but on this it builds up a complete account of the steps by which modern physicists have been led to overthrow our conceptions of yesterday, and put in their place a new theory of the constitution of what we may no longer call matter. It is a volume which reflects great credit on 'The People's Library.'

* * *

I can heartily recommend, with one or two reservations, Dr. Geraldine Hodgson's 'English Literature, with illustrations from Poetry and Prose' (Blackwell, 6s. net). It is not a history of our literature, but an attempt to put before young people the various kinds of good things to be met with in it, and an explanation of their good points. I must confess that when I found the chapter on 'Epic' loaded with a lengthy exposition of an ancient Irish prose tale, and not even a mention of 'Sigurd the Volsung,' I had not much hope of good judgment to come, and I am very sorry that before writing her account of the peoples of these isles she did not consult some competent ethnologist. As a matter of fact, the larger proportion of the inhabitants of these islands are neither Saxons nor Celts but of Neolithic origin—Iberian was good enough to write thirty years ago, but has no meaning now. But from this point on the book is wholly good, with a rare appreciation of poetry, early and late, up to that of our own days. It should prove an excellent introduction to what is the finest literature in the world.

Miss Kathleen Butler, director of language studies at Girton, has written 'A History of French Literature' in two volumes (Methuen, 10s. 6d. net each), for the benefit of University students and others. French literature up to Villon is treated in eighty-eight pages, from him to Montaigne in another seventy-five; the whole work containing about eight hundred pages of text, together with a large number of most useful tables showing at a glance what was going on in other literatures, and in general history and culture simultaneously with French writing. This is not a review; but to test the book for myself I looked up what the author had to say of 'Axel,' a prose poem of Villiers de l'Isle Adam, published posthumously in 1890, and found a very satisfactory account of it. I have very little use for French poetry between Ronsard and Verlaine; between English and French taste in poetry there is a great gulf fixed, as every one who remembers M. Jusserand's famous outburst of disgust at Spenser's poetry and his passionate turning to Racine will agree. Of course, I except La Fontaine, whose simplicity kept him near the art of old France. French prose is a different matter: it is the despair of every one who attempts to write.

* * *

Prof. Curtis has attempted to write 'A History of Mediaeval Ireland from 1100 to 1513' (Macmillan, 21s. net). He has the merit of a pioneer for a considerable portion of this period, but his shortcomings are well-marked. He is evidently unfamiliar with the ordinary processes of English mediaeval law and administration which were the norm for Ireland at the time. Take one example. A copy of the 'Modus Tenendi Parliamenta . . . in Hibernia' was discovered in 1418 (p. 333). His comment on what happened is: "Talbot . . . had the great Seal affixed to this document which gave Ireland its replica of Westminster." This is pure ignorance. What happened was that it was entered on the Patent Roll of the year as an "Inspeximus," whereby it became a record, and it was henceforward quoted as the "Statute of Fitz Empress" (pp. 390, 400), till it was annulled by Poyning's Law. A copy of this Inspeximus—"Exemplification" is the proper word—under Great Seal could be obtained by anyone who would pay for it, and such a copy later came into the hands of Sir Robert Cotton, and is our authority for the Irish 'Modus.' A similar piece of negligence occurs in his note on Yonge. He ought not to have been ignorant that Yonge's two works were published in full twenty years ago: one by Dr. Furnivall and the other by Mr. Steele; and he ought not to have given a wrong reference (p. 335) to a book which has nothing to do with the subject. It is a pity that Englishmen settled in Ireland so soon become *Hiberniores Hibernis*.

* * *

Mr. Rudyard Kipling has issued his Rectorial Address in a neat little pamphlet, 'Independence' (Macmillan, 1s. net). I wonder how many Southerners appreciated his reference to the deacon of Dumfries, who was willing to discuss love in the abstract. Duncan of Ruthwell was the man who invented Savings Banks, and Chalmers was a typical son of the manse, but the deacon stumped me.

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1. Sleeping 'twas lost—a recompense remained.
2. Pierced by a foeman's dart, the lady died.
3. In shifting tents contented to abide.
4. By Paul encountered when he put to sea.
5. Too much by half, although a novice he.
6. Sounds the alarm! O wickedness, avaunt!
7. A sort of fishes that our rivers haunt.
8. Saved by her faith: her works were no great matter.
9. Behead, and eke curtail, a senseless clatter.
10. Hark! his shrill clarion bids the sluggard rise.
11. Pertaining not to earth, but to the skies.

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GREAT ORACLE OF THE VICTORIAN AGE.

1. Defenceless, I, against grim wolves that maul me.
2. Some "little-ear," some "dusty-miller" call me.
3. "Skims, while on wing, the surface of the sea."
4. From branch to branch he flits, from tree to tree.
5. To heart of Spaniard a concoction dear.
6. *Jacta est alea*: now it's in our rear!
7. Here, store of hay and corn we hope to find.
8. Search, sir, but learning you must leave behind.
9. Should all else fail, on this we will rely.
10. Unveiled behold the secrets of the sky!
11. Yellow-crowned kinglet, haunter of the woods.
12. Supplies all markets with the needed goods.
13. In this lies strength, I heard a wise one say.
14. Will that elusive beast be found some day?

Solution of Acrostic No. 87.

S	hee	P	
A	uricul	A ¹	¹ Diminutive of <i>auris</i> , the ear. Called
R	hyncop	S ²	<i>Dusty-miller</i> from the white powder on
T	omti	T	its leaves.
O	lla-podrid	A	² The Skimmer, Cutwater, Shearwater, or
R	ubico	N	Scissor-bill. It obtains its food by
R	ick-yar	D	skimming with its lower mandible the
E	x	Flore	surface of the water.
S	heet-anch	R	
A	pocalyps	E	
R	egulu	S ³	³ <i>Regulus cristatus</i> is the Gold-crested Wren.
T	rad	E	
U	nio	N	
S	ea-serpen	T	

ACROSTIC No. 87.—Mr. J. Chambers, 58 Alexandra Road, N.W.8, is the winner, and has selected as his prize 'Shetland Pirates,' by Frances Pitt, published by Allen and Unwin and reviewed in our columns on November 3 under the title 'British Birds and Beasts.' Thirty-six other competitors asked for this book, 25 named 'Under-London,' 19 'One of Ours,' etc., etc.

Correct solutions were also received from Lilian, Gay, C. H. Burton, and Felix.

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ACROSTIC No. 85.—One Light wrong: Lady Duke.

GLAMIS.—Light 6, "Indisposed," was the error.

Acrostic No. 88 was the last of our Fifth Quarterly Competition, the leaders in which are C. J. Warden, Carlton, Lilian, Baitho, Gay, N. O. Sellam, A. de V. Blathwayt, C. E. P., M. Hogarth, John Lennie, and St. Ives.

Acrostic No. 89 is the First of our Sixth Quarterly Competition.

A. E. K. W.—Many thanks.

M. G. D.—Scone was accepted for Light 5, as stated. Is not your assertion too sweeping? Scotch dictionaries recognize "short-cake." Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary defines it, and says of "Short-bread" that it is the "same as short-cake." Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary defines it, and says "also Short-bread." It therefore looks as though the term were known in Scotland. ("Cake" in my acrostic was a misprint for "cate.").

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Stock Market Letter

The Stock Exchange, Thursday

THE Stock Exchange derived no small degree of satisfaction from the statement that the General Election will take place early next month. Previously, markets had been extremely flat. It was fortunate that the public did not realize how flat most of the markets really were. This knowledge comes only to those whose business it is to test, with their orders, the real state of affairs. War experiences familiarized us with the manner in which markets can quietly curl up, as it were, and the would-be seller finds himself unable to find a buyer for his stock. Nominal prices are still quoted, but it is only as a buyer that the operators can "get on." In Stock Exchange phrase, a market dries up; it only becomes liquid again when the immediate scare is overpast, and public sentiment becomes more normal. This position is never reached in stocks like the War Loan or Victory Bonds: in Shells, Royal Dutch, and other such shares where a free market exists. But there are hundreds of examples of stocks and shares in which there may be a flexible market at most times, but in which it becomes extremely difficult to deal, at any abnormal period, in more than a handful at a time.

* * *

I went inquiring in the Consol market as to what is the maximum amount of stock in which one can deal, these days. We used to be able to get a reasonable price—one, that is, in which the margin between the quoted selling and buying prices is not unduly wide—in a couple of million pounds War Loan, or a million pounds Conversion. One jobber offered to make me a price in £500,000 War Loan, but said that to do so he would have to go "joint" with another firm. In Conversion, which now occupies the place of bell-wether, formerly the prerogative of Consols, he confessed that the line in which he would make a price would have to be determined by the state of conditions prevailing generally. And, seeing that I was asking abstractions, he turned away from me to make a price to another broker, who wanted to deal in £105 5s. 3d. War Stock. Not much difficulty in guessing what that merchant wanted to do.

* * *

The plain man with a little stock is inclined to argue that, if we are to have a Capital Levy, the inquisition would be applied to bank balances just as impartially as it would to investment securities. So he shrugs his shoulders and, the immediate scare past, buys more War Loan or whatever else attracts his financial fancy. He cannot be bothered to transport his money across the Atlantic, in order to place it into dollar securities, as the big capitalists are said to be doing. If the latter are indeed bent upon the purchase of American shares and bonds, they are doing the business outside the Stock Exchange. The amount of trade in the present-day shadow of what the Yankee market used to be is as meagre as ever, with dealings extraordinarily few considering the talk there is of capital fleeing from the pound sterling, chased by an improbable Capital Levy, into dollar issues of all kinds.

* * *

Insurance and banking shares suffered a little in the recent debacle, and the prices have shown but little recuperative power in the succeeding recovery. This deserves notice from the man who is content to buy stock with an eye to its future appreciation. Most people prefer to take a sporting risk, and to look for something that is likely to "go up" in the immediate present. Were it not so, we should see a good deal of investment money flowing into bank and insurance shares. Holders of banking issues are disposed to cherish a friendly grudge against their directors for not cutting up a more juicy share of the profits. Con-

servatism is a fine thing, the very basis and bulwark of austere sound finance, but it is an undoubted fact that banking shares would attract a great deal more popular attention if the Boards of the big banks would loosen the purse-strings, and distribute more of the profits.

* * *

With insurance shares, people are more content to wait for the plums that will fall into the mouths of shareholders when reserve and other funds shall have become full to repletion, and an overflow must of necessity be divided among proprietors. Than the best-class insurance shares, there are few finer investments, considered from the lock-up standpoint, to be found in the Stock Exchange markets.

* * *

The price of tin, the metal, continues to mount in remarkable manner week by week. Yet tin-mining shares are sluggish in responding to the changed conditions which this advance brings to the fortunes of the companies. West of England orders to buy Cornish tin shares are not wanting, but their volume is small. The Middle East tin shares have a peculiar following of their own: the general public overlook the chances that exist of making money from such shares as Siamese, Malayan, Tronoh, and other sound tin-producers. There is a little rattling of dry bones in the Nigerian tin list, where Ropps, Bisichi, Anglo-Continental, Mongu, and a few others are working up. Private reports speak of the success attendant upon the working of the "monitors" on West African fields. These machines do the work of natives, not only at a greatly reduced cost, but more effectively, stripping the overlay (which covers the tin deposits) with a certainty, and to a depth, hitherto almost unknown to the native labourer. If these reports and statements are correct—and monitors are something of a novelty upon the properties—the effect upon the companies' profits is likely to prove substantial. And tin keeps on rising, too.

* * *

Gold also advances in price, with steady consistency. This is due, of course, to the purely adventitious aid afforded by the weakness of the pound sterling in relation to the American dollar. People are afraid lest this should prove to be a transitory influence, as it has turned out to be on a previous occasion. It is not too long ago for even short memories to have forgotten that gold rushed up to a fancy price on this same unstable wing of American exchange. The pound sterling suddenly became dearer; gold dropped with an equivalent speed and the public were left, once more, nursing Kaffir babies acquired at top prices. The remembrance of the losses incurred at that time is restraining optimism now. Yet there are shrewd folks who do not hesitate to buy the good-class South Africans today. Brakpans are well worth the having for sound speculative investment. Our friends Rand mines, although a few shillings dearer than they were when first indicated, will give an excellent return on the money. For West Springs, the Cape appetite is still keen. And, because concession must be made to our innate weakness for gambling, Luipaard's Vlei shares at 6/3 are a thoroughly good counter.

* * *

The Stock Exchange has taken definite rank among City hosts, and its cellar, to say nothing of its kitchen, is already favourably known to members of the Government, and other honoured guests, of whom the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York stand first and second. The first official Stock Exchange dinner-arrangements for the coming winter were settled; cards had been printed; the programme arranged. And now all is cancelled, for the date fixed by the Managers and Committee is Election-day, December 6!

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